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ABSTRACT

This resource guide for teachers contains readings, investigative sources, and first-hand accounts of the actions of the present military regime in Burma, a regime which retained power even after it lost the 1990 national elections, and which sponsors repression of pro-democracy forces in the country. The first section, an introduction, includes articles pertaining to the background of the conflict in Burma between the National League of Democracy (NLD) and the Burmese government, as well as a historical overview of Burma. The guide is divided into the following sections: (1) "Aung San Suu Kyi (Biography, Speeches, and Writings)"; (2) "8-8-88"; (3) "Human Rights Violations"; (4) "Child Abuse"; (5) "Harsh Prison Conditions"; (6) "Women's Rights Violations"; (7) "Education in Burma"; (8) "Environmental Destruction"; (9) "Drugs in Burma"; (10) "Refugees from Burma"; (11) "Personal Testimony from Burmese People"; (12) "SLORC/SPDC Defends Itself"; (13) "Recent Military Crackdown"; (14) "Trade Sanctions: Pro/Con"; (15) "Sample Letters to the Editor and to Political Representatives and Classroom Activities"; and (16) "Resources" (reading list, videos, and websites). (BT)

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Burma:

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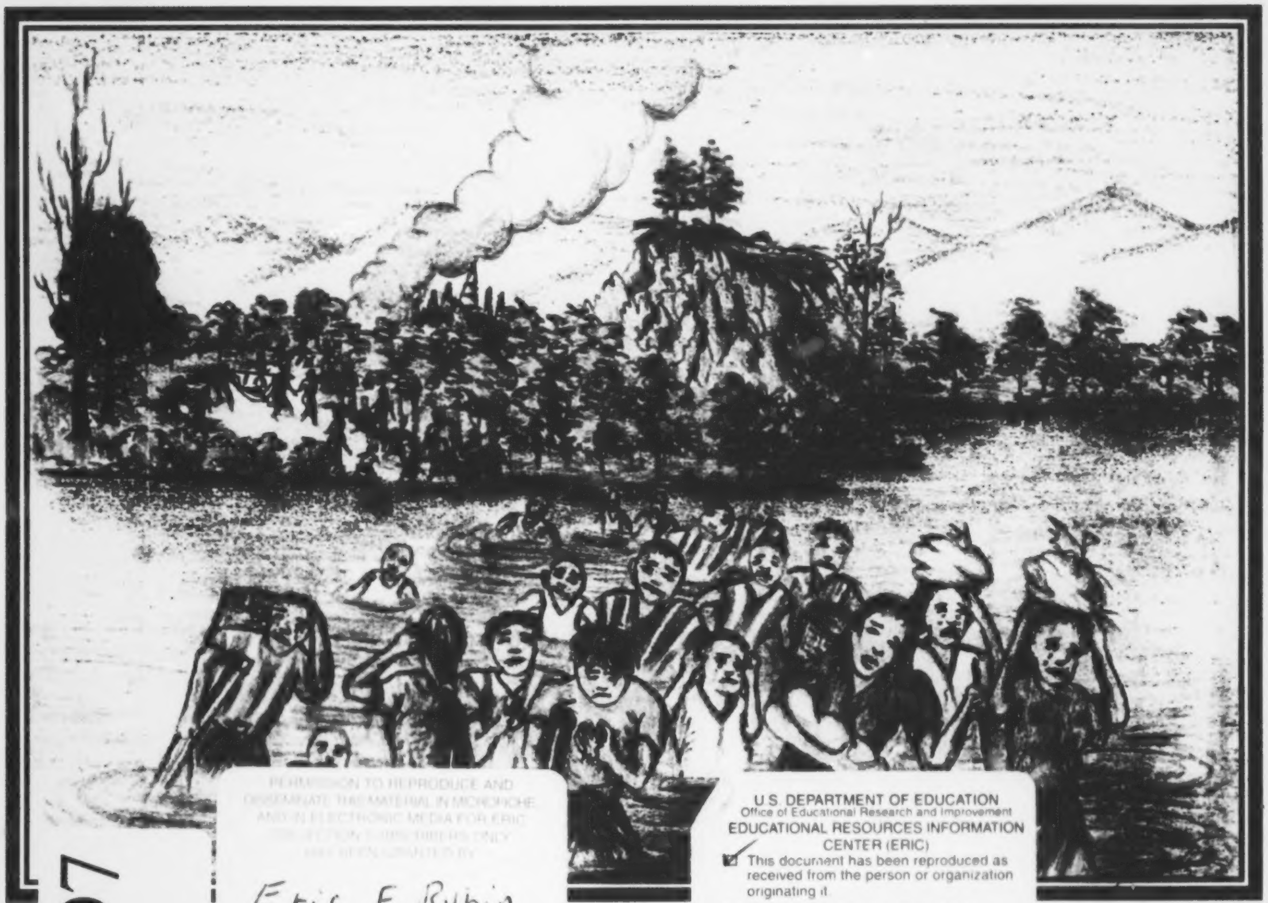

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The picture on the cover of this resource book is one of six postcards designed by students from Burma living in Karen refugee camps in the Paan District of Thailand to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This project was organized by the Education Workers Union in the Paan District with assistance from the AFT International Solidarity Fund.

Burma:

The Struggle for Democracy and Freedom
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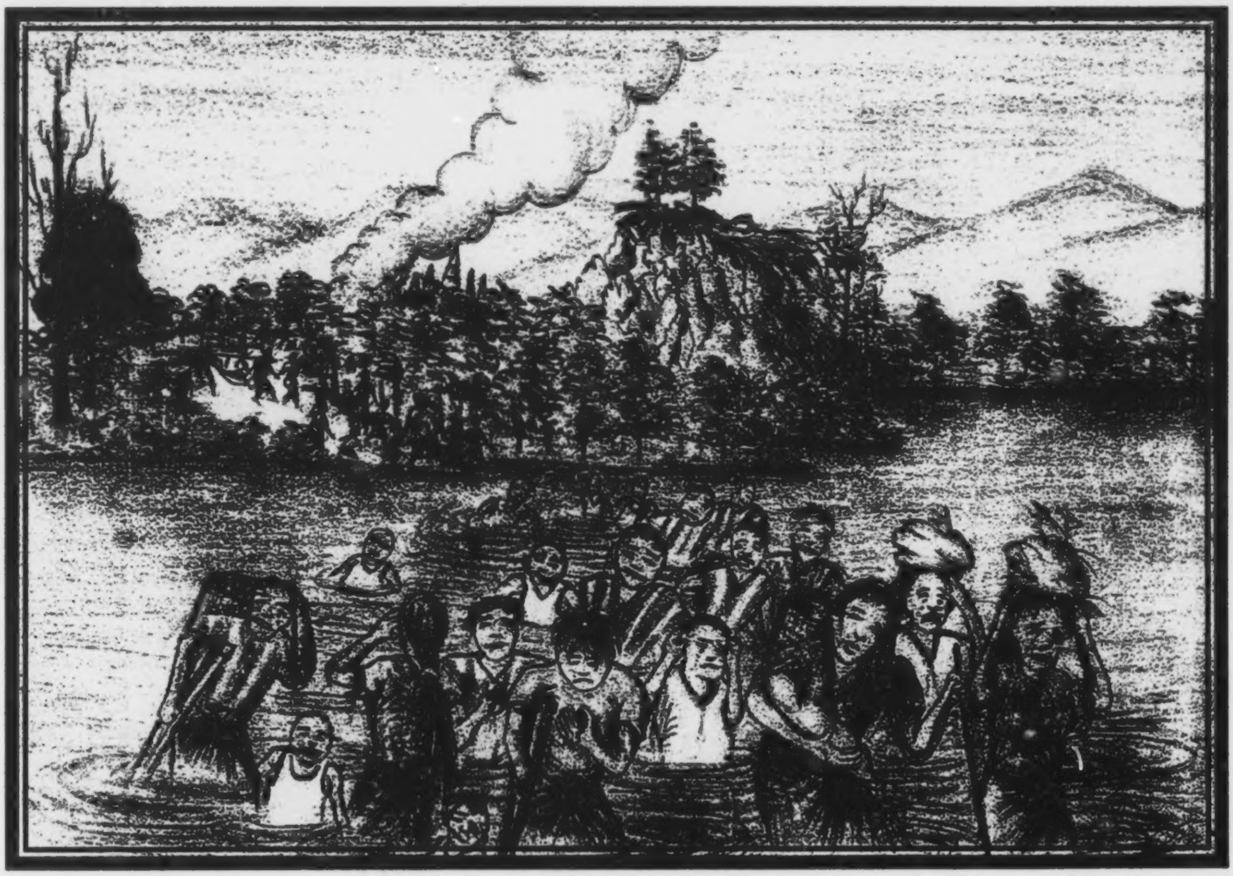

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AMERICAN
FEDERATION OF
TEACHERS
AFL-CIO

[illegible]

SANDRA FELDMAN
President

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Dear AFT Members:

In 1990, The National League for Democracy (NLD) and its leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, upset the ruling military regime in Burma by winning 80% of the votes in national elections. But despite their achievement, the victors were not allowed to assume their rightful positions in a new government. Now, almost ten years later, the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) has yet to relinquish control of the Burmese government.

In fact, since 1990, government sponsored repression of pro-democracy forces within Burma has intensified. Aung San Suu Kyi has been under virtual house arrest. Many NLD representatives, trade union leaders and other leaders of the democracy movement have been imprisoned. Some have died from brutal mistreatment and torture. Many others have been forced into exile to Thailand, India, Europe and the United States. In addition to suppressing dissident voices, the ruling military regime has depleted the country's wealth, devastated the environment, traded in heroin and ruled through terror by enslaving, torturing, raping and murdering its citizens.

In this resource book for teachers, we have assembled readings, investigative sources and first hand accounts of the shocking actions of the military regime in Burma. You can read about the brave opposition movement united behind Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD. This is truly a heroic story of a brave and just opposition standing up to a corrupt, power-hungry and brutally evil government.

What can we do? AFT members and friends do not have to be bystanders as this drama unfolds. The SLORC can be pressured and influenced by the actions of other governments. Foreign investment in Burma does far more to promote and legitimize the military regime than it does to help the common people of Burma and we can let companies that invest in Burma know that we disapprove of their actions. And, most importantly, we can educate the public and our students about the struggle for democracy in Burma.

The AFT is proud to support the democracy struggle in Burma. We hope you will find this collection of articles and resources useful.

In solidarity,

Sandra Feldman
Sandy Feldman
President

Burma:
The Struggle for Democracy and Freedom
A Resource Guide for Teachers

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    - Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the *United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights*
    - Burma: the Place, the Politics, and the People from *Soros Foundation Burma Project*
    - A Chronology of Significant Events in Burma from *Soros Foundation Burma Project*
    - Frequently Asked Questions from *Soros Foundation Burma Project*
    - Burmese Daze by *Madeleine K. Albright*
    - Fighting for Freedom in Burma from *On Campus*, November 1998

2. **Aung San Suu Kyi, biography, speeches and writings** *Aung San Suu Kyi is the leader of Burma's democratic movement, the National League of Democracy. She is internationally recognized and respected for her leadership in the struggle against Burma's military ruling regime and in 1991 she won the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts while under house arrest.*
    - More Than an Icon from *The Washington Post*
    - Commencement Address at American University by *Daw Aung San Suu Kyi*
    - Freedom from Fear by *Daw Aung San Suu Kyi* from "Freedom from Fear and Other Writings"
    - Aung San Suu Kyi Striving to Build a Democracy Amid the Harsh Regime of Myanmar by *Scott Kraft* of the Los Angeles *Times*

3. **8-8-88** *On August 8, 1988, the Burmese military opened fire on a huge crowd of peaceful protesters demonstrating against single-party rule. Thousands of demonstrators were killed including many students, monks and innocent bystanders. Even more were detained or arrested without trials, tortured or forced into exile.*
    - Eyewitness: 'Euphoria in Rangoon' by *Tom White*
    - Eyewitness: 'I Still Remember the Sound of Gunfire' by *Aye Chang Naing*

4. **Human Rights Violations** *Organizations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the United Nation, and the International Labor Organization consider the ruling military regime in Burma one of the worst human rights violators in the world. Government opponents are harassed, minorities are discriminated against, people are forced into slavery, and women and girls are sexually abused.*
    - Human Rights Violations in Burma from *Soros Foundation Burma Project*
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5. **Child Abuse** *Not only are children in Burma denied the right to an education, they are forced into military service, slave labor and exposed to horrific situations.*
    - The Situation for Children in Burma from "No Childhood At All" by *Images Asia*
    - The Mass Defection from "No Childhood At All" by *Images Asia*
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    - Children Sacrificed to War: Burma; Laws Mask State Abuse by Nick Cumming Bruce of *The Guardian*

6. **Harsh Prison Conditions** *Political prisoners in Burma's prison system, notorious for psychological and physical torture of its inmates in addition to inhumane conditions, find themselves incarcerated at the will of the government without a fair trial and with little or no contact with the outside world.*
    - Myanmar Exiles Tell of Torture at Hands of Military by Philip McCracken and Nyi Nyi Lwin of *The Rangoon Post*
    - Myanmar Camps Kill Thousands, Released Thais Say from *Reuters*

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    - Women in Burma: Living Under the Gun from *BurmaNet News*

8. **Education in Burma** *Universities in Burma have been closed for seven of the past ten years and secondary education is reserved only for the elite, while the poorest classes are doomed to a life without a proper education.*
    - Background: Open the Schools Campaign from *BurmaNet News*
    - Burma's Lost Generation from Joe Havely of the *BBC*

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10. **Drugs in Burma** *To keep its monopoly on power, the Burmese government allows druglords to engage in international heroin trade in return for their loyalty. Additionally, the government trades heroin on the international market for arms and military supplies.*
    - Drugs Keep Burmese Junta Afloat As Traffickers Prosper by William Barnes of *South China Morning Post*
    - China Trade Arms to Burma for Heroin by Tiffany Danitz of *Insight*
    - The Thugs and Drugs of Burma by Dennis Berstein and Leslie Kean of *The San Francisco Examiner*

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    - Burma's Refugees from *Soros Foundation Burma Project*
    - Human Rights Watch Condemns Attack on Burmese Refugee Camp from *Human Rights Watch*
    - Myanmar: Atrocities Worsen in Shan State from *Amnesty International*

12. **Personal Testimony from Burmese People** *This section contains first-hand accounts and graphic descriptions of the implementation of brutal and oppressive government policies. Stories include military abuse of civilians, accounts of forced labor and human rights violations, and indiscriminate killings.*
    - Voices of 1988 In Their Own Words from *Burma Debate*
    - Burmese Stories and Interviews from *Human Rights Yearbook 1995: Burma*
    - Prominent Political Prisoners from *Free Burma Coalition: Save NLD Prisoners*

13. **SLORC/SPDC Defends Itself** *The Burmese government tells its side of the story.*
    - When Will the Snake Charming Act End? By U Than Maung from *KYEMON* Burmese state newspaper

14. **Recent Military Crackdown** *During the summer of 1998, the government intensified its harassment of NLD leaders after Suu Kyi's demand that the government to recognize the result of the nation's 1990 free elections in which her party overwhelmingly defeated the ruling party at the polls with 80% of the votes.*
    - Burma Crackdown from the *Washington Post*
    - Arrests in Burma Mark New Clampdown from *Human Rights Watch*

15. **Trade Sanctions pro/con** *On one hand, big businesses claim that investment in Burma provides jobs for the Burmese people and will eventually help bring about desirable and necessary changes. On the other hand, the pro-democracy movement insists that any investment or financial support in Burma will strengthen the government's monopoly on power. Read about both sides of the story.*
    - "Views of the Open Society Institute" by *George Soros*
    - "Testimony Before U.S. Senate opposing *The Burma Freedom and Democracy Act*" by *John F. Imle, Jr., President of Unocal Corporation*
    - Total Denial: Burma by *Earthrights International* and *Southeast Asia Information Nework*
    - AFL-CIO Leadership Calls for Implementation of Sanctions Against Burma's Military Regime news release by the *AFL-CIO Executive Council from Soros Foundation Burma Project*
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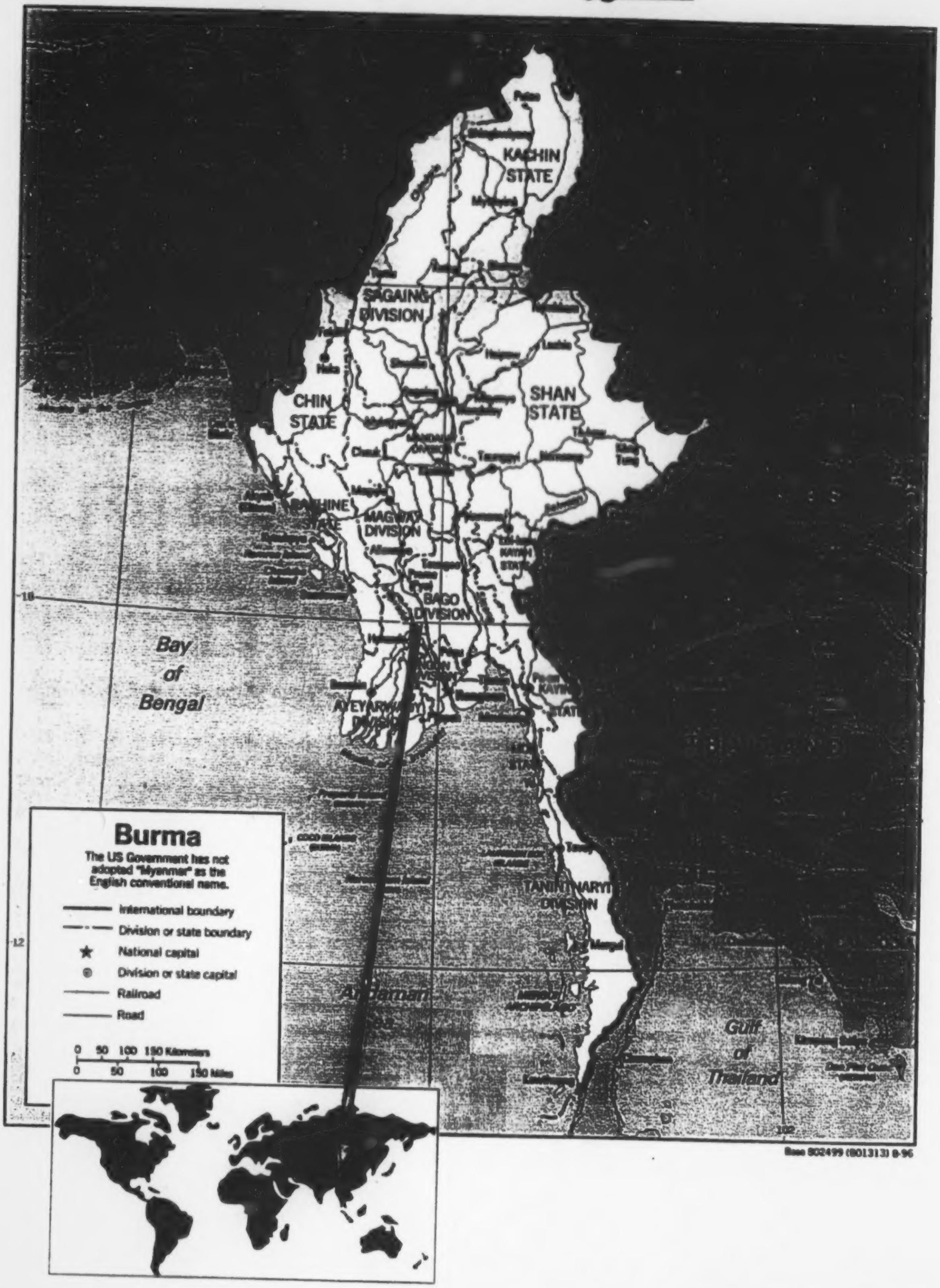
KACHIN STATE
SAGAING DIVISION
CHIN STATE
SHAN STATE
RAKHINE STATE
MAGWAY DIVISION
BAGO DIVISION
KAYAH STATE
KAYIN STATE
AYEYARWADY DIVISION
MON STATE
TANINTHARYI DIVISION
MERGUI ARCHIPELAGO
COCO ISLANDS
Bay of Bengal
Andaman Sea
Gulf of Thailand
Burma
The US Government has not adopted "Myanmar" as the English conventional name.
International boundary
Division or state boundary
National capital
Division or state capital
Railroad
Road
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Base 802499 (801313) 8-96

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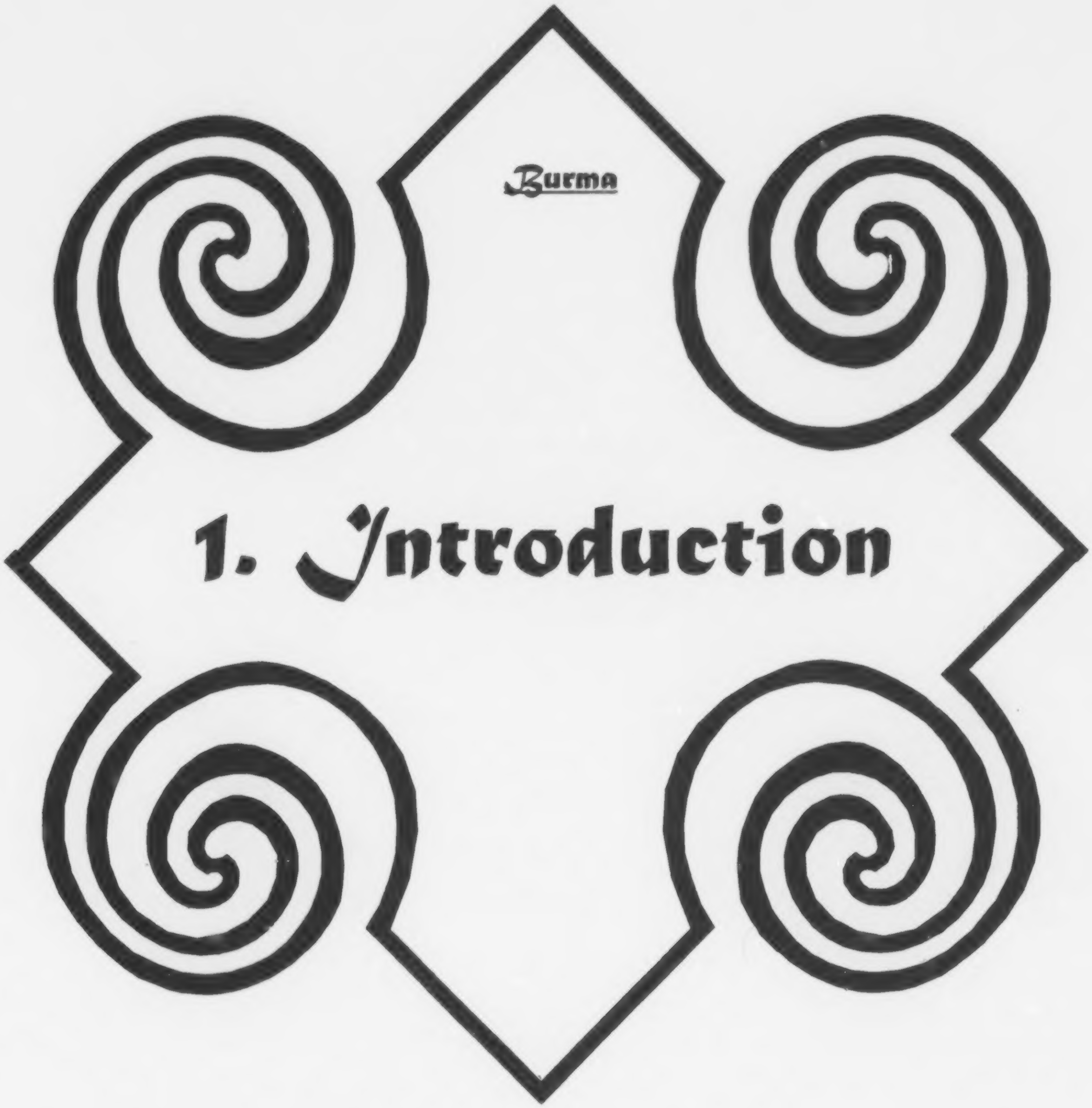

1. Introduction

Support for Democracy in Burma

(Adopted by the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO
National Convention, July 16-20, 1998)

WHEREAS, Burma has been ruled by a brutal military dictatorship since 1962; and

WHEREAS, in May 1990, in a free and fair parliamentary election the National League for Democracy (NLD) — led by Aung San Suu Kyi — received more than 80 percent of the national vote; and

WHEREAS, the military government has refused to honor the results of the 1990 election, and instead has continued to persecute the NLD leadership and other democracy activists and conducted a war against its own people; and

WHEREAS, the actions of the dictatorship — including the extensive use of torture, extra-judicial killings, forced labor, forced repatriation and rape as methods of political repression — have been condemned repeatedly by the United States, the United Nations, the European Union, the International Labor Organization (ILO) and every major human and labor rights organization; and

WHEREAS, Burma is a signatory to ILO Convention 87 on "Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize" and yet was condemned by the ILO in June 1997 for the "total absence of progress in the application of the Convention"; and

WHEREAS, Burmese teachers — like all other workers — face imprisonment, or worse, if they engage in trade union-related activities; and

WHEREAS, according to recent United Nations figures the dictatorship spends twice as much of the national budget on the military than it does on health and education; and

WHEREAS, Human Rights Watch reports that the military supports its development and war efforts by forcing thousands of children as young as twelve to work without pay building roads, bridges and other public works or portering for
the army; and

WHEREAS, according to UNICEF estimates, as many as one-third of Burmese children aged 6-15 work instead of attending school; and

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WHEREAS, the military government has shut down the universities for seven of the last ten years, and has frequently closed secondary schools, denying Burmese youth their right to an education; and

WHEREAS, the Burmese democracy and trade union movement has repeatedly called for support by the U.S. labor movement in its peaceful struggle for a free and democratic Burma;

RESOLVED, that the AFT strongly condemn the Burmese government's violations of human and trade union rights and urge it to end its persecution of democracy and trade union activists; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT urge the military government to enter immediately into unconditional political talks with the leadership of the National League for Democracy — including Aung San Suu Kyi — that will lead to the restoration of democracy in Burma; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT support U.S. government's actions, including economic sanctions, aimed at the returning democracy to Burma; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT encourage its members to participate in local, state and national campaigns — including "selective purchasing" and "disinvestment" campaigns targeted at U.S. corporations doing business with Burma, and the "Open-the-Schools" campaign urging the military to re-open the country's universities and secondary schools — aimed at putting pressure on the dictatorship to enter into dialog with the NLD and other democracy activists; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT join with the NEA, AFL-CIO, Education International and the international labor movement to pursue all possible actions in support of the restoration of trade union and human rights in Burma; and

RESOLVED, that the AFT engage in an education campaign to inform its members — and the U.S. and international labor movement — about the current situation in Burma, and actions they can take individually and collectively to support the Burmese peaceful struggle for democracy.

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

all human rights for all

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

1948-1998

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore,

The General Assembly,

Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.

Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

Everyone has the right to a nationality.

No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17

Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.

The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

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Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Geneva, Switzerland

Burma: the place, the politics, and the people

From Soros Foundation Burma Project

Why Burma? We are frequently asked why the Open Society Institute has a project on Burma. The following brief background may help answer the question.

Burma, the largest country on the Southeast Asian mainland, with a population of 46 million, is home to numerous ethnic groups. The country's major language is Burmese, and most members of minority groups speak Burmese as well as their own languages. Fluency in English is also widespread, particularly among the older generation. The primary religion of Burma is Buddhism, though Islam, Christianity and other religions are practiced.

A reclusive military regime, isolated from the global community, has ruled Burma since 1962. Most of the world did not notice, therefore, when the Burmese people in 1988 rose up in nationwide demonstrations for democracy, which were brutally crushed by a group of generals known collectively as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). The SLORC nominally opened the country to foreign investment and tourism, but tightly controls politics.

As big as the state of Texas, Burma is richly endowed with natural resources. It is strategically located contiguous to two regional superpowers, India and China, and easily accessible to the fastest growing economies in Southeast Asia.

In 1990, the leading opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), overwhelmingly swept Burma's first free elections in three decades. Unwilling to relinquish power, the SLORC ignored the election results, having first placed under house arrest the cofounder of the NLD, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, a leading voice for change and daughter of Burma's revered nationalist figure, General Aung San.

While under detention, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 for her commitment to nonviolent change in Burma. Largely due to an enormous international outcry, she was released in 1995. Burma has had no freedom of association or press since the 1960s. For several months after Suu Kyi's release she and NLD colleagues were allowed to engage in dialogue with crowds that gathered outside her house on weekends. But these gatherings have now been stopped by the military regime. Since late 1996, she has been unable to travel or speak freely, while her aides and supporters, especially members of the NLD, were jailed or forced into exile. The SLORC claims its actions are justified to thwart domestic instability and imperialist influences.

The diverse population of Burma traditionally was ruled by Burman monarchs and ethnic chieftains who accommodated one another, until the British conquered the country in the late 1800s. Colonial rulers, with the help of imported labor from neighboring India, built a network of railroads, roads, and river transport for the export of teak, rice, petroleum, tin, and gems. Opposition to British rule emerged, and by the beginning of the Second World War some nationalist factions in Burma turned to Imperial Japan for deliverance from Britain.

A group of Burmese independence fighters known as the Thirty Comrades--led by Suu Kyi's father, General Aung San--received military training from Japan, and assisted in the Japanese invasion of Burma in 1941. The Burmese nationalists, discovering they had merely substituted colonial masters, switched allegiance, and helped the British defeat the Japanese in 1945. The future seemed optimistic as ethnic and Burman leaders, led by Aung San, signed an agreement to live peacefully in a federal union. At the eve of independence, however, Aung San and most of his cabinet were assassinated in Rangoon.

Nonetheless Burma was ruled by a democratically-elected civilian government from independence in 1948 until 1962, when General Ne Win, another of the Thirty Comrades, staged a coup. Ne Win's "Burmese Way to Socialism" bled the country slowly. Its natural wealth is largely the reason the Burmese people took so long -- over three decades -- to rebel against military rule.

Ne Win's successor, the SLORC, abandoned the "Burmese Way to Socialism" for a capitalism favoring the army. Since 1988, social and economic conditions for most people of Burma have deteriorated, while a military elite has prospered and the size of the army has reached historic levels -- all at the expense of education, health care, and social programs. Even without an external threat, over 40 percent of the state budget goes to defense, while education receives a mere five percent.

The Burmese regime, shunned by traditional sources of investment and loans for its repressive policies, has become more dependent on the country's top export: heroin. Though the SLORC's direct participation in the drug trade is difficult to prove, there is credible evidence that the generals and their associates profit from it, according to a recent U.S. government report.

Meanwhile, Burma has fewer than one doctor per 12,000 inhabitants (whereas Singapore's ratio is one doctor per 725 people), according to UN statistics. As of 1995 more than a third of the population lacked access to health services. Less than 40 percent of the population has safe water. According to a World Health Organization estimate, the rate of HIV infection, spread largely through intravenous drug usage, is as high as in Central Africa.

These adverse social and economic conditions, combined with severe political repression, have driven over one million Burmese citizens from the country. Several hundred thousand Burmese work illegally throughout Asia mostly in construction, as domestics, and in the sex industry.

On April 22, 1997, President Clinton enacted a bill banning new U.S. investment in Burma. He proclaimed: "Through our action today, we seek to keep faith with the people of Burma, who made clear their support for human rights and democracy in 1990 elections which the regime chose to disregard. We join with many others in the international community calling for reform in Burma."

Will engagement or isolation bring about political reform in Burma? Regardless, the country is clearly in transition. If the spirit of the Burmese people prevails, this transition must lead to a more open society.

From Soros Foundation Burma Project

A chronology of significant events in Burma

1824-1886	Burma annexed to British India during three successive Anglo-Burmese Wars.
1937	Burma separated from India and granted a constitution, providing a limited measure of self-government (ethnic minorities were administered under a separate system until independence).
1942-1945	World War II; the Japanese occupy Burma and grant fictitious independence under a puppet regime led by anti-British nationalists, who later turned against the Japanese and aided the Allied forces in retaking the country.
1945	Japanese are defeated; British authority is restored. A coalition of nationalist forces, the Anti-Facist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) emerges as the principle political organization under the leadership of General Aung San.
27 Jan 1947	Aung San and British Prime Minister Clement Antlee sign an agreement in London promising an interim government for Burma in preparation for independence "within or without the British Commonwealth."
12 Feb 1947	Leaders of Shan Kachin and Chin peoples sign an agreement with Aung San at Panglong, and agree to join the proposed Union of Burma in exchange for some degree of autonomy for their respective areas.
19 Jul 1947	Aung San and six cabinet members assassinated in Rangoon. U Nu becomes new AFPFL leader and chief of the cabinet.
24 Sept 1947	A new constitution is approved, guaranteeing a democratic system and limited federalism. The Shan and Karenni states get the right to secede from the proposed Union of Burma after a ten-year period of independence. A Kachin State with no right to secede is established. There is no provision for a Karen state.
4 Jan 1948	The Union of Burma becomes an independant nation outside of the commonwealth, carrying on the British tradition of parliamentary democracy. U Nu becomes first democratically elected Prime Minister of independent Burma.

2 Mar 1962	Burmese army led by General Ne Win overthrows U Nu's democratic government and seizes power in Rangoon. U Nu and his ministers are jailed along with over thirty ethnic leaders. The new junta, the Revolutionary Council is established, investing Gen. Ne Win with full executive, legislative and judicial powers (these remained in force until 1947). The parliament is destroyed and the constitution suspended.
3 Apr 1962	The "Burmese Way to Socialism" is published to be the guiding ideological basis of the regime.
4 Jul 1962	The Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) is formed by the new Revolutionary Council. All private enterprises are nationalized and state control centralized economy is introduced.
3 Jan 1974	A new constitution guaranteeing a single-party socialist rule is adopted. Separate Chin, Mon and Arakan states are established, but without the limited autonomy which the ethnic states were guaranteed under the 1947 constitution. Gen. Ne Win becomes president of the Socialist Republic of Burma.
2 Mar 1974	The 12th anniversary of the 1962 coup; the new constitution comes into effect.
29 Jun 1974	The US and Burmese governments sign an agreement for "suppressing the illegal cultivation, processing, production, and trafficking of narcotic drugs." The US government agrees to supply Rangoon with Bell 205 helicopers for this purpose.
11 Dec 1974	The government declares martial law. 1987 Burma's economy having plumetted under the military rule, Burma achieves Least Developed Country status at the UN.
1988	A massive democratic movement initiates in Rangoon and spreads througout the country. August 8 marks the last and by far largest rebellion in a series of peaceful student-led demonstrations against the single-party rule. Hundreds of protestors are killed as the army opens fire on demonstrators.
18 Sept 1988	The Burmese army resorts to violence to silence the nationwide uprising. An estimated 10,000 students, Buddhist monks and civilians are killed on the streets by the Burmese Army. Thousands of activists are arrested and tortured during interrogation. The Burmese Army seizes power and forms the

	State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC).
24 Sept 1988	The National League for Democracy (NLD) is formed. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi becomes the General Secretary of the NLD.
19 July 1989	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is placed under house arrest (to remain until her release six years later).
27 May 1990	Multi-Party general elections are held. The NLD wins 392 out of 485 seats in Parliament.
27 July 1990	The SLORC issues Order No. 1/90 stating that it will not accept in any way the establishment of a civilian government based on an interim constitution, and that the SLORC intends to hold onto power until a national convention that it has convened can pass a new constitution guaranteeing the military a dominating role in the political life of Burma. The SLORC stresses that the responsibility of the elected representatives of the 1990 general elections is to draw a constitution.
18 Dec 1990	The democratic government in exile, the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) is formed by representatives elected in the 1990 general elections.
10 Dec 1991	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is awarded 1991 Nobel Peace Prize.
3 Mar 1992	The United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) adopts a resolution on "the situation of Human Rights in Myanmar" by consensus and appoints a UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur to submit a report to the UNGA and the UNCHR. The UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur vistits Burma annuallly before the UNGA convenes in October. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur gets a year extension at each session of the UNCGR since 1993.
9 Jan 1993	First session of SLORC's National Convention is held. Elected representatives of the people constitute only 15.24 % of the delegates. Other delegates are handpicked by the SLORC.
20 Dec 1993	The United Nations General Assembly adopts a resolution by consensus requesting the UN Secretary-General to assist in the implementation of the resolution and in the process of national reconciliation.

10 Jul 1995	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is released from house arrest.
29 Nov 1995	The NLD walks out of the National Convention. In a statment issued by the NLD, it states that the National Convention in its present form is not acceptable to the people of Burma and because it is not acceptable to the majority of the people, it is not acceptable to the NLD.
6 May 1996	The NLD calls for all peoples representatives elected in the 1990 general elections to convene in Rangoon from 26-28 May 1996.
21-25 May 1996	256 NLD activists arrested or detained by the SLORC.
7 Jun 1996	The SLORC issues a law banning all acts disturbing public order, making violators subject to 5-020 years imprisonment. The law also subjects the writing of a state constitution to the same punishment. 144 of the 262 detained representatives are released.
Current Situation*	Besides changing its name from SLORC to SPDC, little has changed concerning the relationship between the Burmese regime and the NLD, Aung San Suu Kyi, and their supporters. Several times in 1998 Suu Kyi embarked on "sit-ins" in her car as regime officials prevented her from meeting other party members. During the late summer of 1998, as Suu Kyi demanded the ruling regime to allow the elected parliament of 1990 to take office, the opposition endured a new crackdown by the military during which several hundred members of the NLD including many elected officials were incarcerated. Also, during the same period of time, Burmese students and supporters around the world organized events commemorating the 10th anniversary of the 8-8-88 crackdown.

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* Edited by AFT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. "Burma" or "Myanmar"?

At independence in 1948 under an elected government, the country's name became the Union of Burma. In 1989, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which had seized power a year before, issued a decree changing the country's official name to "Myanmar," which is an English transliteration of "Burma" from Burmese. The names of several cities, rivers, and regions were similarly revised, for example, the capital Rangoon, to "Yangon." The Burmese democracy movement rejects these symbolic but significant changes for two reasons. First, using the Burmese language name ignores the fact that Burma is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual state, with a large minority for whom Burmese is a second or even third language. Further, such a serious action as changing a country's name should only be taken with the consent of its peoples, which the unelected military regime clearly does not possess.

2. What is the "State Peace and Development Council"?

The State Peace and Development Council is the current name of Burma's military junta. The army has controlled the country's government since a 1962 coup. The junta seized direct power on 18 September 1988, calling itself the State Law and Order Restoration Council or SLORC. Its declared aim is to "ensure peace and tranquillity." One of its first acts in 1988 was to massacre thousands of peaceful pro-democracy demonstrators on the streets of Rangoon, and in other towns and cities around Burma. Junta-backed candidates were resoundingly rejected in free elections on 27 May 1990, but the generals simply ignored the results. In November 1997, the SLORC renamed itself the State Peace and Development Council, changing little more than its name. The junta rules by decree. In reality, the only law in Burma is what the generals from day to day decide it to be.

3. Human rights: How bad is Burma?

Burma's military junta is one of the world's worst human rights violators. Even the United Nations, usually hesitant to criticize its members, has repeatedly condemned the regime's abuses. The March 1997 resolution adopted unanimously by the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva described a litany of abuses including murder, torture, rape, political imprisonment, and forced labor. Many other reports by the International Labor Organization, Amnesty International, Article 19, Human Rights Watch, and other independent groups offer deeply disturbing details of the regime's ill-treatment of Burma's peoples. Physical abuse is compounded by a total lack of free expression and free association enforced by the military's secret police. The junta is accountable to no one. Burma's laws, economic plans, environmental decisions, and other policies are made without the consultation or approval of Burma's peoples.

4. Narcotics: Is Burma a special problem?

Burma has long been a major grower of opium poppies and a producer of heroin processed from opium harvested from the poppies. Since the SLORC seized power in 1988, opium growth and heroin production have increased dramatically. Now, nearly four times as much heroin is produced. Most is smuggled from Burma and is largely responsible for an explosion of heroin addiction around the world. The supply boom has made street heroin far cheaper and much purer than ever before, and new generations of addicts are appearing in many countries. The junta has made no serious effort to control this trade. To the contrary, it has concluded cease-fires with armed ethnic opposition groups that permit opium growing and unfettered trade within Burma. Heroin profits are reportedly being laundered in hotel construction and other businesses inside Burma. And Burma's peoples are suffering as well. Heroin addiction is soaring inside the country and with it an AIDS epidemic, as addicts share contaminated needles that spread the disease.

5. Can trade and investment promote democracy in Burma?

Contact with the outside world can be an important stimulus to awareness and respect for human rights. Yet without a willingness of the ruling powers to truly open their society, trade and investment will have little effect. Investments in extractive industries such as petroleum and mining often have the least positive results, because they employ few local people and profits go directly to the government. Mining and oil and gas operations often have severe environmental impact as well, about which the public is not informed and is not permitted to question. Lack of respect for human rights can also raise investment returns in labor intensive industries, since workers unable to organize are more easily exploited.

6. Who do sanctions hurt?

Few ordinary Burmese benefit from the international investment reaching Burma today. Most foreign companies enter joint ventures directly with the regime, with front companies owned by the army, other state organs, or reputed or officially "rehabilitated" druglords. Most profits go directly to the regime or the small clique of soldiers and businessmen close to the junta. Much foreign exchange is being used to expand and better equip an army that has no external enemies. While new hotels and consumer goods are seen in Burma's main cities, these luxuries do not reach the average Burmese, who suffer from severe inflation that makes even daily necessities prohibitively expensive. Severe sanctions would no doubt temporarily cut Burma's economic growth rate. Yet if sanctions help bring a democratic and accountable government, rational economic planning, large-scale international aid, trade, and investment could quickly follow — and spur genuine and more equitable growth.

7. Can the United Nations help Burma?

The United Nations has condemned Burma's military junta repeatedly for its gross and egregious human rights abuses. The General Assembly has passed several resolutions demanding the junta respect the results of the May 1990 elections, in which the National League for Democracy, led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, won over 80% of the seats. Despite these clear and serious statements of principle, the UN has taken no concrete steps against the dictatorship. A logical first move would be the imposition of an international arms embargo against the junta. But meaningful UN action must come from the Security Council, where it faces veto by China, the junta's main arms supplier and political ally.

8. What can individual governments do?

There is no absolute right to international trade and investment. Any citizen, company, local or national government can choose not to do business with another. The US, Canada, and the European Union will not sell weapons to Burma. The US has also led efforts to block the junta's access to international loans and aid from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the Asian Development Bank. Far more painful for the generals would be a total ban on foreign trade and investment. The regime needs an influx of foreign currency from natural gas and other exports and tourism not only to finance arms purchases, but to convince Burma's peoples and the international community that the army can bring economic progress even as it practices brutal repression. Governments can also press the United Nations to adopt an effective arms embargo and other sanctions against the junta. Further, international investigations into the generals' links to the heroin trade could be pursued vigorously. Governments and regional groupings can employ their moral right and legal statutes to pressure the military regime to respect the Burmese peoples' basic rights.

9. How can I get more information about Burma?

This booklet provides a general background on the struggle for democracy and respect for human rights in Burma. Contacts for more information are given at the end of each section. Resource lists at the end of each Burma Backgrounder provide contact information for groups working on Burma issues and bibliographic references. The Burma Project website, http://www.soros.org/burma.html, offers extensive on-line resources. This booklet is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.soros.org/burma/crisis.html. Your comments and suggestions are welcomed. Limited copies of this booklet are available by writing to:

Burma: Country in Crisis
Burma Project, Open Society Institute
400 West 59th Street, 4th floor
New York, NY 10019 USA
phone: (212) 548-0632 fax: (212) 548-4655
e-mail: burma@sorosny.org

JUL 25

BURMESE DAZE

BY MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT

An extraordinary human and political drama is being played out in Burma. At center stage is the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), a hydra-headed military junta that has dominated the country since repressing a democratic uprising six years ago. Sharing the spotlight is the charismatic Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Prize-winning leader of the pro-democracy forces, daughter of the founder of modern Burma, Aung San. Observing intently, but almost silently, are Burma's educators, professionals and ordinary citizens, scarred by the past and wary about promises of a better future.

The unresolved question is whether the SLORC will release the stranglehold it has imposed on Burmese political life and allow real freedom. In September, I became the highest-ranking U.S. official to visit Burma since the junta took power. I went to remind the SLORC that a fundamental change in its relationship with the United States will occur only when there is a fundamental change in its relationship with the Burmese people. I also went to express American solidarity with Aung San Suu Kyi.

Shortly after my arrival in Rangoon on September 8, in a huge room adorned with tulips, teapots and elephant tusks, I sat down with Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt. He is the chief of SLORC intelligence and the government's interlocutor of choice with Western officials. The general began our discussion with a verbal jog through his country's unsettled past. He argued that outsiders (like myself) cannot appreciate the three factors that set Burma apart from its democratic neighbors: its Buddhist culture; its ethnic diversity; and the special role the military has played over the forty-seven years since the country gained its independence. He claimed that the military had saved the country from chaos on three occasions, in 1958, 1962 and 1988, the last time by rescuing Burma from a fate worse than Bosnia's by imposing peace upon anarchic, Communist-inspired mobs.

Ignoring for the moment this distortion of history, I informed the general that the purpose of my visit was to talk about the future, not the past. Whatever the perceived justification for its earlier actions, the SLORC now faces an historic choice between the status quo and a democratic transition. The general insisted that the SLORC's approach is the best way to guarantee stability and that the Burmese people support its efforts to rebuild the economy and ensure law and order. "Even at midnight," he said, "you can walk around town without danger; that is why the Burmese people have such happy faces." I replied that during a lifetime of studying repressive regimes I had found the smiling quotient in many of them to have been quite high. Authoritarian leaders often delude themselves that they are loved, but the smiles they see are usually prompted not by affection, but fear.

The next morning, I met Aung San Suu Kyi for breakfast at her lakeside home. This is the place to which she had returned from England in 1988 to care for her dying mother; where she had soon thereafter written her first political speeches; and where — until her release this past July — she had spent almost six years under house arrest. In our discussion, Aung San Suu Kyi called for a dialogue between the pro-democracy forces and the SLORC. Asked when that dialogue should start, she referred to an old SLORC slogan: "Precisely, Correctly, Quickly."

I was struck, during our conversation, by her seeming contradictions. Outwardly fragile, she is clearly very strong; outwardly serene, her reserves of patience have worn thin; obviously determined, she avoids confrontation and seeks reconciliation. In the room where we had breakfast, there hangs an immense photograph of Aung San. Other photos show him surrounded by his family, including a 2-year-old girl with deep piercing eyes. Aung San was assassinated in 1947 at the age of 32, but today it is Aung San Suu Kyi, and not the SLORC, who represents Burmese national identity and pride. In the last thirty years, only she and the movement she leads have received a mandate from Burma's people.

For years, controversy has surrounded programs conducted within Burma by United Nations agencies, including UNICEF and the UN Development Program. Their efforts raise a classic policy dilemma: how to help people living under despotism without helping the despots themselves. In Burma, most UN agencies walked the line by funneling their assistance directly to people in need. I visited UNICEF projects that clearly meet this criterion: a school, a health center and a potable water project. Nevertheless, local UN officials admitted the difficulty of carrying out effective development work in the face of government efforts to turn that work to its own advantage.

What, then, is Burma's future? How will the drama play out? How, for example, will the SLORC respond to Aung San Suu Kyi's recent visit to a dissident monk; to her hosting a student political event over SLORC objections; and to her party's decision to reappoint her general-secretary in apparent contravention of a SLORC decree?

If donor countries deny the SLORC international respectability and development assistance, its leadership is more likely to acquiesce in this gradual enlargement of political space. Unlike kleptocracies elsewhere, the SLORC genuinely views itself as the guardian of Burma's economic future, however contemptuous it remains of political freedom. Over time, it may have to admit the connection between economic growth and political reform.

The United States should expedite this realization. Poverty in Burma is endemic, development spotty, the foreign debt is $5.5 billion. Most farming, road repair and construction is done with equipment many years out of date. Western capital has helped other Southeast Asian economies to expand. And so it is no wonder that SLORC seeks foreign investment and international loans. But the U.S. has stopped its economic assistance program and urged others to do the same.

Next year, the SLORC will launch a massive tourism campaign. It will offer the world breathtaking scenery, visits to fabled Mandalay, beautiful Buddhist temples, ancient palaces, picturesque lakes and unique hand-crafts. But the roads and sights they are invited to see will have been refurbished through the sweat and toil of forced labor. Democracies should be ashamed to encourage their businesspeople to be "first in Burma," for this would provide the SLORC with the booty it needs to resist mounting pressure for a political opening. "Constructive engagement" must be, in fact, "constructive." International banks must not bail the SLORC out. And economic sanctions — especially in strategic industries — should neither be discarded nor triggered rashly, but rather kept in reserve.

The world should have faith, like Aung San Suu Kyi, in the strength of the democratic forces of Burma. Despite their poverty, the Burmese are sophisticated, highly literate people, who have learned from bitter experience that justice, law and political rights are essential to national development. In an ethnically diverse country, a strong sense of national pride has survived. According to the cliché, dictators ride on tigers' backs; either they stay on top or they are eaten. But recent experience belies this. Peaceful transitions to democracy have occurred on five continents. If the SLORC sincerely wants to build a multiparty democracy, it should go ahead. This can be done, in the SLORC's favorite phrase, "systematically"; but it should begin soon and must not take forever. After all, South Africa — with problems at least as intractable — went from apartheid to Nelson Mandela's inauguration in less than five years.

Vaclav Havel, who endorsed Aung San Suu Kyi for the Nobel Peace Prize, has told me many times how important it was for those struggling to bring freedom to Eastern Europe to know that they had friends and supporters around the globe. It is essential now that democratic forces abroad maintain solidarity with those pursuing change in Burma. The SLORC has a choice — one road leads to isolation and ultimately to disaster; the other to respect and participation in the region's economic miracle. Half measures or phony measures (such as the SLORC-orchestrated National Convention) are not enough. The SLORC must choose. If it does, the United States will help and so will others. And Burma may become a model of the successful transition from tyranny to democracy, for its neighbors and for the world.

MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT is U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations. This article first appeared in the December 4, 1995 issue of The New Republic *and is reprinted with permission.*

Special Report

Fighting for freedom in Burma

As political unrest mounts in Burma, the AFT is encouraging members to raise their voices in support of the cause for democracy in that country. At its convention this summer in New Orleans, AFT delegates passed a strongly worded resolution assailing the Burmese government for massive human rights abuses, including arrests, murder, torture, rape and forced labor. It urges AFT members to add to the pressure on the brutal military dictatorship there in a variety of ways, from pressing for "selective purchasing" and "disinvestment" campaigns, to organizing petition drives, to helping raise awareness of the situation there in your schools, unions and communities.

The education sector has played a large role in national events and the democracy movement in Burma over the last decade. Ten years ago, in August 1988, university students who were demonstrating for better education set off a nationwide democracy uprising. The government responded ruthlessly, killing hundreds of students, arresting thousands more and shutting down the universities. Another peaceful demonstration in 1996 again resulted in the universities being closed. All told, the Burmese universities have been closed for seven of the past 10 years.

In 1990, under pressure from a growing democracy movement spearheaded by Aung San Suu Kyi and the party she co-founded, the National League for Democracy, the government was forced to hold elections. The NLD won more than 80 percent of the vote, but the military junta would not step down. Under house arrest from 1989 to 1995 and under de facto house arrest since then, Aung San Suu Kyi has continued to be the primary leader for her people. She was awarded the Nobel Peace prize in 1991.

More recently, in August the Burmese government called students back to universities that had been closed for the past two years and told them to sit for final exams. When students protested, the round of arrests and demonstrations began again. When 18 foreigners were arrested, including students from American University, it brought international attention to the situation. At the same time, leaders of the NLD were attempting to sit down together to form a legislature. By the end of September, the government had arrested more than 800 opposition leaders.

In April, a delegation composed of AFT vice president Thomas Y. Hobart and AFT staff member Steven Fleischman traveled to Burma and Thailand to provide training and other support for Burmese educators, trade unionists and democracy activists. On their visit, they were able to visit schools set up in refugee camps on the Thai-Burmese border and provide financial help, computers and other supports to the untrained but dedicated teachers there.

Support for the cause of democracy in Burma has been mounting on many fronts internationally. The most effective action, according to Simon Billenness of the Franklin Research & Development Corporation—a socially responsible investment firm based in Boston—is passage of selective purchasing laws, which are aimed at businesses. Massachusetts and 23 cities and municipalities have passed laws prohibiting local governments from using taxpayer dollars to do business with companies that do business in Burma. "This sends a powerful political message of support to the Burmese democracy movement," says Billenness. "It also lends economic weight to the call for sanctions that Aung San Suu Kyi has given her blessing to."

In the same vein, students at Harvard and Stanford prevented their administrations from allowing Pepsi on campus. Pepsi has since joined the more than 25 companies that have withdrawn from Burma, including Apple, ARCO, Texaco, Motorola, Eastman Kodak and Reebok.

Another strategy is to award honorary degrees to Aung San Suu Kyi. This provides an opportunity for her husband, British academic Michael Aris, to accept the award on her behalf and read her message to supporters.

Another way of stepping up the pressure is to have college and high school student bodies pass resolutions of support for democracy in Burma, says Shalini Nataraj, the Asian program associate for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, an international human rights group. Many schools and colleges have held teach-ins and vigils and sponsored speakers on Burma. The UUSC has a Burma Action Packet that it will send out upon request.

You can help

For more information on the situation in Burma or to learn how you can take action, contact the following organizations.

Free Burma Coalition
http://www.freeburmacoalition.org

This is an Internet-based organization that has a listserve and a network of more than 100 campuses around the globe.

Open Society Institute
Burma Project
http://www.soros.org/burma.html

One of the best sources for up-to-date information on Burma.

Unitarian Universalist Services Committee
130 Prospect Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
snataraj@uusc.org
http://www.uusc.org

Ask for the "Burma Action Packet."

AFT International Affairs Department
Fax: 202/879-4502
e-mail: iad@aft.org

For classroom discussion, write for the "Burma Packet," a collection of articles about Aung San Su Kyi and the Burmese struggle for democracy.

To see a copy of the AFT convention resolution on Burma, go to the AFT Web site at **http://www.aft.org**.

To register your support for Aung San Suu Kyi and the Democracy Movement and demand the release of the political prisoners, write to:
Ambassador Tin Winn
Embassy of Burma
2300 S Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008

With a financial donation from the AFT presented to her by AFT vice president Thomas Y. Hobart, headmistress Mu Deh was able to arrange the rebuilding of the school.

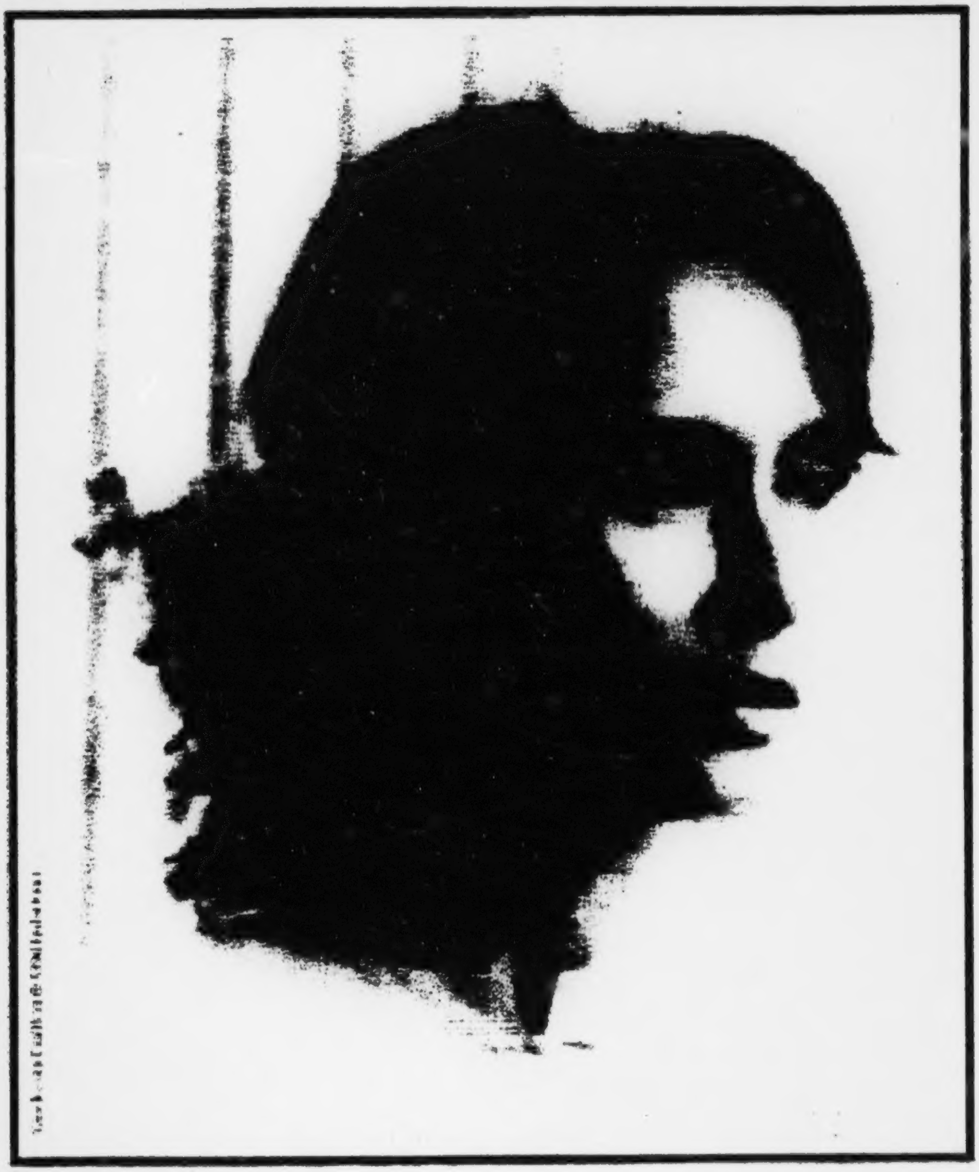
Above, this photo of the Huay Kaloke Karen refugee camp, which was virtually destroyed by forces allied to the Burmese regime, was taken by school headmistress and teacher union leader Mu Deh. At top left is what was left of the school library after the attack. AFT staffer Steve Fleischman poses with educators in the library of "Central High," the high school in a Karenni refugee camp

Burma

2. Aung San Suu Kyi

JUL 29

FREE BURMA!



"Until we have a system that guarantees rule of law and basic democratic intitutions, no amount of aid or investment will benefit our people."

-Aung San Suu Kyi

More Than an Icon

Saturday, August 1, 1998; Page A14

BURMA'S MILITARY dictators ended their latest standoff with democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi by the only means they know: force. She had driven from her home in the capital toward a provincial city to meet political colleagues, and troops had blocked her way. For six days, she waited in her sun-baked car, peaceful but resolute. Then soldiers pinned her to the back seat, ejected her companions and drove her back to Rangoon.

The regime's heavy-handedness, and its denial of Aung San Suu Kyi's basic right to travel and meet with whom she chooses, drew condemnation from many governments, as well it should. But to a large extent, even while seeking to support Aung San Suu Kyi, these foreign ministers largely missed the point. "Aung San Suu Kyi is an icon, whether you like it or not," New Zealand's foreign minister warned Burma's junta, speaking for the United States, Europe and others. "You've really got to give her a lot more freedom, whether you like it or not."

An icon is an image, a symbol, a saintly or Christ-like figure. Aung San Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace laureate and undoubtedly a profile in courage, has become a symbol of democracy. But to treat her only, or primarily, as an icon is to diminish her. For Aung San Suu Kyi, 53, is a political leader; she heads the National League for Democracy, which won four out of every five seats in a 1990 parliamentary election that the military regime still refuses to honor.

The six-day standoff, and whatever comes next in this unfinished story, needs to be understood in that context. Aung San Suu Kyi did not set out to stage a protest or win world sympathy. She set out to do what political leaders do: consult with colleagues. Burma's dictators have arrested many of her associates, and they refuse to let others come to her, so she was trying to reach them. No doubt she will try to do so again.

Treating Aung San Suu Kyi as an icon lets Burma's dictators off the hook of negotiating with her as the legitimate political leader that she is. It lets other nations express admiration and concern while ignoring the substantive ways they are keeping her tormentors in power. For it is contracts with America's Unocal Corp., France's Total, Singapore's and China's arms merchants and other companies from Europe, Asia and North America that allow the unpopular generals to hold on.

Recognizing that fact, the United States at least has banned new investments. The European Union has yet to follow suit, and Southeast Asian nations continue to advocate engagement. But engagement has produced nothing, whereas multilateral sanctions -- as advocated by Aung San Suu Kyi herself -- could have a real effect. Not only is Burma's regime one of the world's most odious, profiting from press-ganged labor and the heroin trade; but, unlike in most such cases, a legitimate, democratically anointed alternative already exists.

Aung San Suu Kyi has called for Burma's elected parliament to convene by Aug. 21. That is the pragmatic goal of a flesh-and-blood politician. The Clinton administration and its allies should back it in pragmatic, concrete ways.

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Commencement Address by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi At American University

Commencement Address by Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma Upon Receiving Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree in absentia at American University--January 26, 1997

Address delivered on her behalf by her husband, Dr. Michael Aris

It is an honour to receive an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from a university known for its liberal values and international outlook. It is a privilege to deliver the commencement speech at this assembly. However, what would have been the greatest joy, that of seeing the faces of the graduating students, has been denied to me. There is little that can compare with the light of hope and anticipation that shines from those who have satisfactorily completed one phase of their lives and are about to embark on another more complete, more challenging phase.

No educational institutional can fully prepare its pupils to cope with all that they will have to face during the course of their lives. However, such values as intellectual freedom, humanitarian ideals and public service, fostered by American University, should go a long way towards equipping young men and young women to make the best of any environment in which they may find themselves.

Beginning a new life is a challenge that will put to the test our mental, intellectual, emotional and spiritual resources. Some are destined to lead tranquil lives, safe in the security of a society that guarantees fundamental rights. Others may find themselves in situations where they have to strive incessantly for the most basic of rights, the right to life itself. It is no simple matter to decide who are the more fortunate, those to whom life gives all or those who have to give all to life. A fulfilled life is not necessarily one constructed strictly in accordance with one's own blueprint: it can be a glorious collage of materials that have come unexpectedly to hand. How wonderful it is that we do not know what tomorrow will bring. Of course we all hope that our tomorrow will be happy. But happiness takes on many forms. Political prisoners have known the most sublime moments of perfect communion with their highest ideals during periods when they were incarcerated in isolation, cut off from contact with all that was familiar and dear to them. From where do those resources spring, if not from an innate strength at our core, a spiritual strength that transcends material bounds? My colleagues who spent years in harsh conditions of Burmese prisons, and I myself, have had to draw on such inner resources on many occasions.

Nobody can take away from us the essential and ultimate freedom of choosing our priorities in life. We may not be able to control the external factors that affect our existence but we can decide how we wish to conduct our inner lives. We may live in a society that does not grant freedom of expression but we can decide how much value we wish to put on the duty to speak out for our rights. We may not be able to pursue our beliefs without bringing down on us the full vengeance of a cruel state mechanism but we can decide how much we are prepared to sacrifice for our beliefs. Those of us who decided to work for democracy in Burma made our choice in the conviction that the danger of standing up for basic human rights in a respective society was preferable to the safety of a quiescent life in servitude.

Ours is a non-violent movement that depends on faith in the human predilection for fair play ind compassion. Some would insist that man is primarily an economic animal interested only in his material well being. This is too narrow a view of a species which has produced numberless brave men and women who are prepared to undergo relentless persecution for the sake of upholding deeply held beliefs and principles. It is my pride and inspiration that such men and women exist in my country today.

In Burma it is accepted as a political tradition that revolutionary changes are brought about through the active participation of students. The independence movement of our country was carried out to a successful conclusion by young leaders, including my own father, general Aung San, who began their political careers at Rangoon University. An institution with such as outstanding reputation for spirited opposition to established authority is naturally a prime target for any authoritarian government. The military regime which assumed state power in 1962 blasted the Rangoon University Students' Union building out of existence within a few months of their rule and made it illegal for students to form a union.

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In 1988 the people of Burma rose up against the rule of the Burma Socialist Programme Party, the civilian cloak of a military dictatorship. At the vanguard of the nationwide demonstrations were students who demanded, among other basic rights, the right to form a union. The response of the military junta was to shoot them down. More than eight years and much repression on the students of Burma have still not relinquished their quest for an association which would promote their interests and articulate their aspirations and grievances. As recently as last month, there were student demonstrations where the call for the right to form a union was reiterated. The security forces used violence to disperse the demonstrators and a number of young people from my party, the National League for Democracy, were arrested on the grounds that they had been involved in the organization of the demonstrations. I was accused of having held meetings with students and holding discussion with them. Things have indeed come to a sorry pass in a country if meetings between politicians and students are seen as acts of subversion. My party has never made a secret of our sympathy for the aspirations of students. We work to forge close links between the different generations that a continuity of purpose and endeavour might not be threaded into the fabric of our nation.

When we are struggling against overwhelming odds, when we are pitting ourselves against the combined might of the state apparatus and military power, we are sometimes subject to doubts, usually the doubts of those whose belief in the permanence of an existing order is absolute. It is amazing how many people still remain convinced that it is only wisdom to accept the status quo. We have faith in the power to change what needs to be changed but we are under no illusion that the transition from dictatorship to liberal democracy will be easy, or that democratic government will mean the end of all our problems. We know that our greatest challenges lie ahead of us and that our struggle to establish a stable, democratic society will continue beyond our own life span. We are aware that much will be demanded of us and that there will be times when we are discouraged and disappointed. But we know that we are not alone.

The cause of liberty and justice finds sympathetic responses in far reaches of the globe. Thinking and feeling people everywhere, regardless of colour or creed, understand the deeply rooted human need for a meaningful existence that goes beyond the mere gratification of material desires. Those fortunate enough to live in societies where they are entitled to full political rights can reach out to help their less fortunate brethen in other parts of our troubled planet. Young women and young men setting forth to leave their mark on the world might wish to cast their eyes beyond their own frontiers towards the shadowlands of lost rights. You who are gathered here to celebrate the opening of the doors of hope and opportunity might wish to assist our fight for a Burma where young people can know the joys of hope and opportunity.

Part of our struggle is to make the international community understand that we are a poor country not because there is an insufficiency of resources and investment, but because we are deprived of the basic institutions and practices that make for good government. There are multinational business concerns which have no inhibitions about dealing with repressive regimes. Their justification for economic involvement in Burma is that their presence will actually assist the process of democratization. Investment that only goes to enrich an already wealthy elite bent on monopolizing both economic and political power cannot contribute towards egality and justice, the foundation stones for a sound democracy. I would therefore like to call upon those who have an interest in expanding their capacity for promoting intellectual freedom and humanitarian ideals to take a principled stand against companies which are doing business with the military regime of Burma. Please use your liberty to promote ours.

This honorary degree that you have conferred on me today constitute a recognition of our struggle. I would like to conclude by expressing my sincere thanks to American University and its Board of Trustees for thus supporting the cause of democracy and human rights in Burma.

Thank you.

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Freedom from Fear

The following was first released for publication by the editor to commemorate the European Parliament's award to Aung San Suu Kyi of the 1990 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. The award ceremony took place in her absence at Strasbourg on 10 July 1991. In the same week the essay appeared in full or in part in The Times Literary Supplement, *the* New York Times, *the Far East Economic Review, the* Bangkok Post, *the* Times of India *and in the German, Norwegian and Icelandic press.*

It is not power that corrupts but fear. Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it. Most Burmese are familiar with the four *a-gati*, the four kinds of corruption. *Chanda-gati*, corruption induced by desire, is deviation from the right path in pursuit of bribes or for the sake of those one loves. *Dosa-gati* is taking the wrong path to spite those against whom one bears ill will, and *moga-gati* is aberration due to ignorance. But perhaps the worst of the four is *bhaya-gati*, for not only does *bhaya*, fear, stifle and slowly destroy all sense of right and wrong, it so often lies at the root of the other three kinds of corruption.

Just as *chanda-gati*, when not the result of sheer avarice, can be caused by fear of want or fear of losing the goodwill of those one loves, so fear of being surpassed, humiliated or injured in some way can provide the impetus for ill will. And it would be difficult to dispel ignorance unless there is freedom to pursue the truth

unfettered by fear. With so close a relationship between fear and corruption it is little wonder that in any society where fear is rife corruption in all forms becomes deeply entrenched.

Public dissatisfaction with economic hardships has been seen as the chief cause of the movement for democracy in Burma, sparked off by the student demonstrations 1988. It is true that years of incoherent policies, inept official measures, burgeoning inflation and falling real income had turned the country into an economic shambles. But it was more than the difficulties of eking out a barely acceptable standard of living that had eroded the patience of a traditionally good-natured, quiescent people – it was also the humiliation of a way of life disfigured by corruption and fear. The students were protesting not just against the death of their comrades but against the denial of their right to life by a totalitarian regime which deprived the present of meaningfulness and held out no hope for the future. And because the students' protests articulated the frustrations of the people at large, the demonstrations quickly grew into a nationwide movement. Some of its keenest supporters were businessmen who had developed the skills and the contacts necessary not only to survive but to prosper within the system. But their affluence offered them no genuine sense of security or fulfilment, and they could not but see that if they and their fellow citizens, regardless of economic status, were to achieve a worthwhile existence, an accountable administration was at least a necessary if not a sufficient condition. The people of Burma had wearied of a precarious state of passive apprehension where they were 'as water in the cupped hands' of the powers that be.

> Emerald cool we may be
> As water in cupped hands
> But oh that we might be
> As splinters of glass
> In cupped hands.

Glass splinters, the smallest with its sharp, glinting power to defend itself against hands that try to crush, could be seen as a vivid symbol of the spark of courage that is an essential attribute of those who would free themselves from the grip of oppression. Bogyoke Aung San regarded himself as a revolutionary and searched tirelessly for answers to the problems that beset Burma during her times of trial. He exhorted the people to develop courage: 'Don't just depend on the courage and intrepidity of others. Each and every one of you must make sacrifices to become a hero possessed of courage and intrepidity. Then only shall we all be able to enjoy true freedom.'

The effort necessary to remain uncorrupted in an environment where fear is an integral part of everyday existence is not immediately apparent to those fortunate enough to live in states governed by the rule of law. Just laws do not merely prevent corruption by meting out impartial punishment to offenders. They also help to create a society in which people can fulfil the basic requirements necessary for the preservation of human dignity without recourse to corrupt practices. Where there are no such laws, the burden of upholding the principles of justice and common decency falls on the ordinary people. It is the cumulative effect on their sustained effort and steady endurance which will change a nation where reason and conscience are warped by fear into one where legal rules exist to promote man's desire for harmony and justice while restraining the less desirable destructive traits in his nature.

In an age when immense technological advances have created lethal weapons which could be, and are, used by the powerful and the unprincipled to dominate the weak and the helpless, there is a compelling need for a closer relationship between politics and ethics at both the national and international levels. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations proclaims that 'every individual and every organ of society' should strive to promote the basic rights and freedoms to which all human beings regardless of race, nationality or religion are entitled. But as long as there are governments whose authority is founded on coercion rather than on the mandate of the people, and interest groups which place short-term profits above long-term peace and prosperity, concerted international action to protect and promote human rights will remain at best a partially realized struggle. There will continue to be arenas of struggle where victims of oppression have to draw on their own inner resources to defend their inalienable rights as members of the human family.

The quintessential revolution is that of the spirit, born of an intellectual conviction of the need for change in those mental attitudes and values which shape the course of a nation's development. A revolution which aims merely at changing official policies and institutions with a view to an improvement in material conditions has little chance of genuine success. Without a revolution of the spirit, the forces which produced the iniquities of the old order would continue to be operative, posing a constant threat to the process of reform and regeneration. It is not enough merely to call for freedom, democracy and human rights. There has to be a united determination to persevere in the struggle, to make sacrifices in the name of enduring truths, to resist the corrupting influences of desire, ill will, ignorance and fear.

Saints, it has been said, are the sinners who go on trying. So free men are the oppressed who go on trying and who in the process make themselves fit to bear the responsibilities and to uphold the disciplines which will maintain a free society. Among the basic freedoms to which men aspire that their lives might be full and uncramped, freedom from fear stands out as both a means and an end. A people who would build a nation in which strong, democratic institutions are firmly established as a guarantee against state-induced power must first learn to liberate their own minds from apathy and fear.

Always one to practise what he preached, Aung San himself constantly demonstrated courage – not just the physical sort but the kind that enabled him to speak the truth, to stand by his word, to accept criticism, to admit his faults, to correct his mistakes, to respect the opposition, to parley with the enemy and to let people be the judge of his worthiness as a leader. It is for such moral courage that he will always be loved and respected in Burma – not merely as a warrior hero but as the inspiration and conscience of the nation. The words used by Jawaharlal Nehru to describe Mahatma Gandhi could well be applied to Aung San: 'The essence of his teaching was fearlessness and truth, and action allied to these, always keeping the welfare of the masses in view.'

Gandhi, that great apostle of non-violence, and Aung San, the founder of a national army, were very different personalities, but as there is an inevitable sameness about the challenges of authoritarian rule anywhere at any time, so there is a similarity in the intrinsic qualities of those who rise up to meet the challenge. Nehru, who considered the instillation of courage in the people of India one of Gandhi's greatest achievements, was a political modernist, but as he assessed the needs for a twentieth-century movement for independence, he found himself looking back to the philosophy of ancient India: 'The greatest gift for an individual or a nation . . . was *abhaya*, fearlessness, not merely bodily courage but absence of fear from the mind.'

Fearlessness may be a gift but perhaps more precious is the courage acquired through endeavour, courage that comes from cultivating the habit of refusing to let fear dictate one's actions, courage that could be described as 'grace under pressure' – grace which is renewed repeatedly in the face of harsh, unremitting pressure.

Within a system which denies the existence of basic human rights, fear tends to be the order of the day. Fear of imprisonment, fear of torture, fear of death, fear of losing friends, family, property or means of livelihood, fear of poverty, fear of isolation, fear of failure. A most insidious form of fear is that which masquerades as common sense or even wisdom, condemning as foolish, reckless, insignificant or futile the small, daily acts of courage which help to preserve man's self-respect and inherent human dignity. It is not easy for a people conditioned by fear under the iron rule of the principle that might is right to free themselves from the enervating miasma of fear. Yet even under the most crushing state machinery courage rises up again and again, for fear is not the natural state of civilized man.

The wellspring of courage and endurance in the face of unbridled power is generally a firm belief in the sanctity of ethical principles combined with a historical sense that despite all setbacks the condition of man is set on an ultimate course for both spiritual and material advancement. It is his capacity for self-improvement and self-redemption which most distinguishes man from the mere brute. At the root of human responsibility is the concept of perfection, the urge to achieve it, the intelligence to find a path towards it, and the will to follow that path if not to the end at least the distance needed to rise above individual limitations and environmental impediments. It is man's vision of a world fit for rational, civilized humanity which leads him to dare and to suffer to build societies free from want and fear. Concepts such as truth, justice and compassion cannot be dismissed as trite when these are often the only bulwarks which stand against ruthless power.

From Freedom From Fear and Other Writings
by Aung San Suu Kyi

AUNG SAN SUU KYI STRIVING TO BUILD A DEMOCRACY AMID THE HARSH REGIME OF MYANMAR

by Scott Kraft

Los Angeles Times, January 1996

Aung San Suu Kyi had a rigid routine during the six years she spent under arrest in her family's lakeside home. She would rise at 4:30 a.m. for exercise and meditation, then spend the day reading biographies or autobiographies and listening to the radio. The only human being she would see was the maid.

Although free for eight months now, she still spends most of her days in that two-story house. But the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner is hardly isolated. Two appointments secretaries, one for foreign dignitaries and the other for fellow party members, have guided thousands of visitors to meet her.

"I'm afraid I can no longer keep to a strict timetable," Suu Kyi says. "I can't get up at 4:30 anymore because there are times I don't get to bed until 2 a.m. If I got up early, I wouldn't be able to operate full-steam for 12 hours."

Many here hoped her release was a first step toward democracy in Myanmar. But the military regime, which nullified her party's victory in the 1990 elections, still runs the country. It is stage-managing a constitutional convention while trying to attract foreign investment.

Suu Kyi is bidding her time and rebuilding her party network. Her weekdays are filled with appointments and on weekend, hundreds of supporters gather outside the gated compound to hear her speak and answer their questions. Soon, she says, the government will come to its senses.

Even as the government tries to ignore her, Suu Kyi, 50, remains the most-respected political figure in Myanmar. Her father, Aung San, is considered, even by her detractors, as the greatest hero of Burmese independence. He was assassinated in 1947, when she was 2.

Suu Kyi left Burma in 1960, at age 15, and later received a degree from Oxford University. She married a Briton, Michael Aris, who is now a professor and specialist in Tibetan studies at Oxford. In 1988, she returned to Burma to tend to her ailing mother and became a leader of pro-democracy movement.

Aris and the couple's two sons, Kim, 18, and Alexander, 22, who are in school abroad, usually visit Suu Kyi at holidays, as they did during her years of house arrest, if the government grants them visas. Suu Kyi is prevented from leaving Myanmar only by the certainity that she would never be allowed to return.

In person, Suu Kyi is low-key and polite, though her determination is evident. She always refers to the country as Burma and the capital as Rangoon, purposefully ignoring the government's decree that the nation be called Myanmar and the city, Yangon.

She meets visitors at home in a square room surrounded by 1940s-era photographs of her family and a wall-sized painting of her father. "The painting is a bit Andy Warhol, don't you think?" she says. "But it's really a very good likeness."

Question: How would you assess the eight months since you've been released? What are the positive developments and the disappointments?

Answer: Well, in politics, I don't think you ever get disappointed as such. It's an occupational hazard that things don't always turn out as you would wish them to. You hope for the best and prepare for the worst. That's politics. But we still have the strong support of the people and we manage to get along with our party building.

Q: Many in the West thought that when you were released, everything would begin to improve.

A: I don't think it's as simple as that. There are some people who say I was released because the government thought the National League for Democracy was dead. But in fact, it is far from dead. There have been miscalculations like that in the past by the government. In the 1990 elections, the government thought we might win a plurality but not an absolute majority. In fact, we got 82%, with the result that those elections have been totally ignored and our members persecuted.

Q: So you aren't disappointed in the slow pace of change?

A: I wouldn't say "disappointed" is the word. There is so much happening within our party that it does compensate for what is not happening on the other side. Of course, we know that the best thing for the country is national reconciliation, which can only take place through dialogue. And we hope that it will take place sooner rather than later. But that doesn't mean we just sit and hope. We have other work to do and we carry on.

Q: So you aren't impatient with the pace of things?

A: If you are very busy, you have no time to be impatient. If you ask us when do we want democracy, well, we want it now, of course. I feel just as strongly about that as anybody else. But because we are so occupied with our numerous jobs, we are not that impatient.

Q: Do you think the current constitutional conference, in which your party is not participating, is a step in the right direction?

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A: No. That constitution is not headed for democracy. In the first place, they are not allowing political parties to operate effectively, and without political parties operating effectively there can be no multiparty democracy. The constitution they are writing really doesn't mean anything. A constitution is just a piece of paper unless it has the support of the people. Such constitutions do not last.

Q: So what can you do to get this government to change direction?

A: It is the will of the people that the country should become a democracy, and I'm sure the people will join in guiding the country to its democracy. We will do what we can as a legally registered party. We will use political means of reaching our goal. This is our constant.

Q: So you are talking about passive resistance.

A: We don't really believe that the way to bring about democracy is by encouraging popular uprisings. We believe that democracy will come through the strength of the political will of the people, expressed through political parties.

Q: How does it feel to be a free citizen?

A: I'm a free citizen but the country is not free. So I feel like a citizen in an unfree country. I appreciate the opportunity to be in touch with the people. That is what our work is all about. You know, I always felt free. I felt free when I was under house arrest because it was my choice. I chose to do what I'm doing and because of that. I found peace within myself. And I suppose that is what freedom is all about.

Q: Do you think that it is possible the government thought it could make you a non person by releasing you?

A: Sounds likely, doesn't it? Yes, it seems likely.

Q: The government often points out that you are married to a foreigner. How important is that criticism to the average Burmese?

A: I don't think it means very much. If I were married to a Burmese, they'd probably attack my husband's family for other reasons that he was foreign. Don't forget that they are also attacking --very, very viciously-- other party leaders who are not married to foreigners.

Q: Is your husband able to visit you?

A: He came for Christmas, but last year he was refused a visa for the Easter holidays. So he comes if he gets a visa.

Q: You have frequently called for dialogue with the government.

A: Yes, we believe in dialogue and we will always believe in dialogue because that's the way all political problems end up.

Q: Has the government made any overtures to you?

A: Our party has a policy that we will make no statements about dialogue until we decide we are ready to bring out an official version.

Q: So you're saying ....?

A: What I'm saying is that I'm not answering your question (laughs).

Q: If there is an election based on the government's new constitution, would your party participate?

A: We don't even know whether there is going to be a constitution or what sort of constitution. In any case, I don't think we should be talking about the next elections when the issue of the last elections has not yet been resolved.

Q: Currently, the government is promoting foreign investment, and many companies, including Unocal in Los Angeles, have investments here. What's your message to those companies?

A: We always said -- very, very clearly -- that Burma is not right for investment. The climate is not right because the structural changes necessary to make an investment really profitable are not yet in place. We have now acquired in Burma a small group of very, very rich people. We did not have such people eight years ago -- people who could go to a hotel and spend $1,000 on a meal. That was unheard of. And the gap between the haves and the have-nots is increasing. That does not make for social stability.

Q: Do you think the government's hold on power will be strengthened as it opens up the economy?

A: Well, it is not a free market. Some are freer than others in their access to the market. The mechanism necessary for a really healthy open economy does not yet exist. And one of the most important parts of that is the rule of law. You have to know where you stand . . . Without that, there can be neither credibility nor confidence. And every businessman must agree that good business cannot be done without credibility and confidence.

Q: What do you do to discourage investment?

A: It's not just what I say and it's not just the support there is abroad for the movement for democracy. Potential investors who really study the situation the situation in depth, who don't just take a superficial view, will come to their own conclusion that the time is not right. They may want to put a little bit here so they can have a toe hold, waiting for the day when Burma takes off. Of course, that day will be when democracy comes.

Q: In your heart, do you think that will come? Are we talking five years?

A: I can't really say. But certainly I don't think it will be that long. On the other hand, I know there will be a lot of problems to deal with once we have democracy. In fact, I think we'll probably have more problems after we have democracy than before. This is always the case when a system changes from an authoritarian system to an open and transparent one.

Q: You tell the crowds that democracy is no panacea.

A: I tell them that under a democracy, we will have to be prepared to take responsibility for our country's problems. Once they have democracy, they can no longer blame the government because they are really the government.

Q: But won't there need to be pressure to bring about change here?

A: There is international pressure. But of course what is more important is that there is pressure from within. The Burmese people are tired of authoritarianism, and they have seen for themselves that authoritarian system has not done the country any good at all. Our standards of education are falling. Standards of health are falling. The fact that we have new hotels does not make up for the fact that our children are less well-educated.

Q: Were you surprised, after your release, that there was still strong support for you? Did you worry that you might have been forgotten?

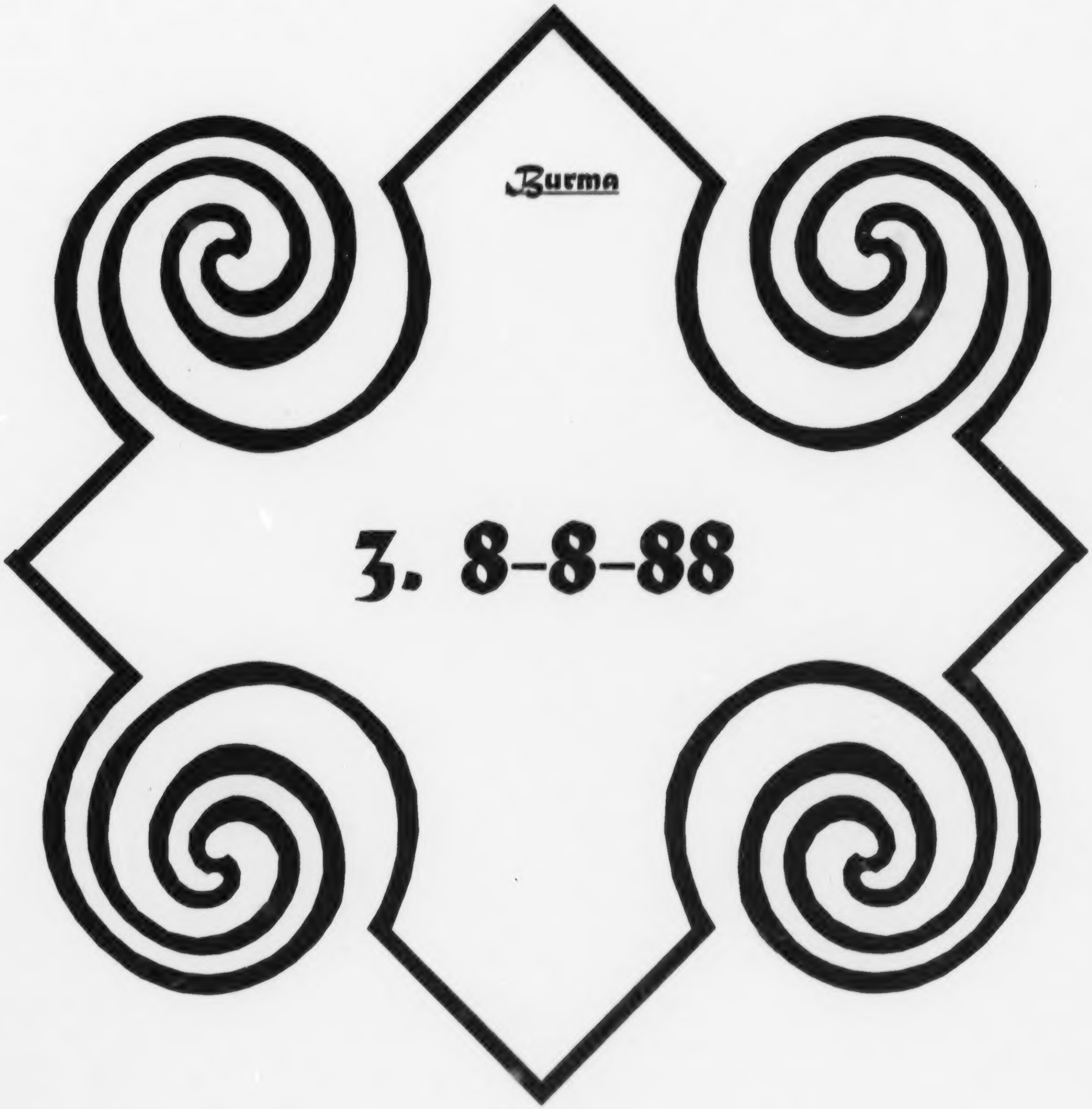
A: No, no. I was not that surprised. It is nothing to do with me. It has more to do with the desire of the people for a system that gives them both liberty and security. This is what the people want, isn't it? People want to be free and at the same time they want to be secure.

Q: And you personally?

A: It is not me they are supporting in particular. The government seems to think it's me personally that the people are supporting. The government always gets things wrong. We won the elections in 1990 because the people wanted democracy. It was not because of me.

Q: Do you worry about your safety?

A: No. I don't worry very much at all. It's not because I'm all that courageous or anything. It's just that there is no point in it. If they want to do anything to me they can do it any time they like. ======= Note: Scott Kraft, Paris bureau chief for the Times, interviewed Aung San Suu Kyi at her home in Yangon, Myanmar.



Burma

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BURMA
Ten Years On

Thursday, August 6, 1998 Published at 13:36 GMT 14:36 UK

Eyewitness: 'Euphoria in Rangoon'

Tom White was the British Cultural Attaché based in the Burmese capital, Rangoon, from 1985 to 1989. He writes here for News online about his memories of the remarkable day when the people of Burma rose up as one in peaceful protest against their rulers:

Monday 8 August 1988 began as a typical, sultry, mid-monsoon Burmese day - dry and sunny but with the threat of thunder and lightning and a downpour to come.

I made it in unusually quick time from home to my office and British Council library on the ground floor of the British Embassy.

The streets were devoid of the usual din of geriatric traffic: overloaded buses converted from World War II army trucks and jeeps, ancient cars and motorbikes, all coughing and backfiring along at less than 10 mph on the 68 octane petrol popularly known as 'Burmese no-star'.

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Defiant students hold the military insignia upside-down ***Photo courtesy T White***

Unusually too, there was no queue of students and other library-users waiting to slip in, as unobtrusively as possible, to the only English language public library in this whole country of 42 million people.

The great attraction was not so much Shakespeare and Arthur Ransome, but the availability of newspapers and periodicals from Britain, and the use of a photocopier. Unauthorised possession of even a humble typewriter was, and still is, a criminal offence in Burma.

Hunger for uncensored news

With the written word available only to the brave minority, where it can be used to incriminate and incarcerate at the whim of rulers, the main source of uncensored news about the outside world and Burma itself, was - and still is - the easily-concealed transistor radio.

Some 10 days earlier, a visit from the BBC's Chris Gunness, posing like so many other journalists as a tourist to get his seven-day visa, resulted in a highly significant crop of interviews with students, dissidents and even a disgruntled soldier.

Thousands gathered in Bandoola Square, Rangoon ***Photo courtesy T White***

These were broadcast from London by the BBC's Burmese Language Service to millions of listeners. Crucially, they also announced the date for the first general strike since the military coup of 1962.

A few minutes after 8am on the appointed day there was a flurry of excitement in the street outside the Embassy, and everyone rushed to the windows and doors.

Just down Strand Road, which borders the Irawaddy River, the dockworkers had downed tools to signal the start of a national strike.

Masked students were tearing through the deserted streets on their bicycles to spread the news, and announce the arrival of demonstrators, marching from every outlying township towards City Hall and th

'We want full democracy!'

Within an hour, the first columns of marchers had arrived - students in red headbands decorated with their symbol the fighting peacock, monks - who earn their daily crust by begging - carrying their almsbowls upside down in protest, as well as thousands of ordinary townsfolk.

They brandished portraits of Aung San, the 1940s hero of national independence from Britain, old pre-1962 Burmese flags and hand-painted banners calling for democracy and the overthrow of the government and the Burmese Socialist Programme Party.

The joy of free speech for the first time in 26 years *Photo courtesy T White*

The streets resounded with the chant (in Burmese) 'We want full democracy; that's what we want!'

Not for the first time, the diplomatic corps was entirely taken by surprise by these stirring events. By 11 am, the Ambassador decided to allow us all to go home early.

I set off home with our 75-year-old librarian. She was a remarkable lady who had been in Burma since 1938, the year of the "1300 uprising" that marked the beginning of the end of British Colonial rule.

Today, was the 50th anniversary of that event - commemorated at the auspicious time of eight minutes past eight on the eighth month of 1988.

A trip that had taken nine minutes that morning took nearly two hours to retrace.

We stopped to view the joyous, peaceful parades and euphoric slogan-chanting of a people celebrating their first experience of free speech for 26 years.

The terrible outcome, five weeks later, after army trouble-makers had done their worst mowing down the demonstrators and strikers in their thousands, was, on that glorious day, happily unimaginable.

ROSALIE T. Mc KERNAN

One of SLORC child soldiers during Armed Forces day Parade in Rangoon. (27 March 1995)

BURMA
Ten Years On

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Eyewitness: 'I still remember the sound of gunfire'

Aye Chang Naing was a student in Burma in 1988 and took part in the demonstrations ten years ago. After the military crackdown he was forced to flee the country and now lives in Norway where he is the news editor for the Voice of Democratic Burma radio service.

These are his memories of those events:

The military turn their guns on the demonstrators, Rangoon 1988

It was first frustration, pain and anger that burst into explosion, then there were hopes and dreams and finally, we were left with permanent scars.

I still vividly remember the sound of gun fire, people shouting for help, smoke from the crematorium chimney and the swearing of evil men during the summer of 1988 that claimed the lives of thousands of peaceful demonstrators.

I was a final year dentistry student.

March 1988: students take to the streets

In March, the students from Rangoon University staged the first demonstration inside the campus. I was there.

'Beaten to death'

I went back to my college to inform my colleagues. When I returned, I saw hundreds of soldiers surrounding the campus and I saw students running away and crying.

Around 100 students were beaten to death or drowned in the lake that afternoon. I felt great pain and anger.

Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon, August 8, 1988: "It would be vrey foolish of the government if they were to try and crack down"

The government may not feel the pain that stays inside the mind of the students but everybody knew that once the universities were reopened, the students would be there to stage another anti-government demonstration.

Two days after the universities were reopened, there were widespread demonstrations at various universities and campuses throughout Rangoon.

A wounded demonstrator is carried off after troops open fire

'Brutally crushed'

It lasted for little more than two weeks and it was brutally crushed.

There was more frustration, more pain and more anger.

It was 8th August 1988 that the frustration exploded in millions of Burmese throughout the country.

The killings, shootings and beatings could not really help the military to end the demonstrations any longer.

Perhaps thousands were killed during those few days but it did not matter any more - the most important thing was to get rid of the government.

'Hopes and dreams were dashed'

Thousands were killed in the military crackdown

There was joy and hope once the troops withdrew from the streets. People from all walks of life demonstrated, demanding an end to 26-years of one party military rule.

In September 1988, these hopes and dreams were dashed. Thousands of army trucks and tanks rolled into the cities and towns.

The sound of gunfire day and night made it seem like the country was in the midst of civil war.

Burma today: "love your motherland, respect the law"

Hospitals were filled with dead bodies and injured demonstrators. Smoke came out from chimneys at the city crematoriums almost continuously. That left permanent scars among many citizens of Burma.

I left a note to my parents, saying that I'll be gone for few months.

Then I left my home immediately.

From Rangoon to Thailand, it took me about two weeks: first by bus, by foot, then by boat and then by bus again.

I arrived in Thailand in September. It was ten years ago.

Like most students who left from Burma at that time, I did not think I would be in exile for ten years but the memory of 1988 is still like something that happened yesterday.

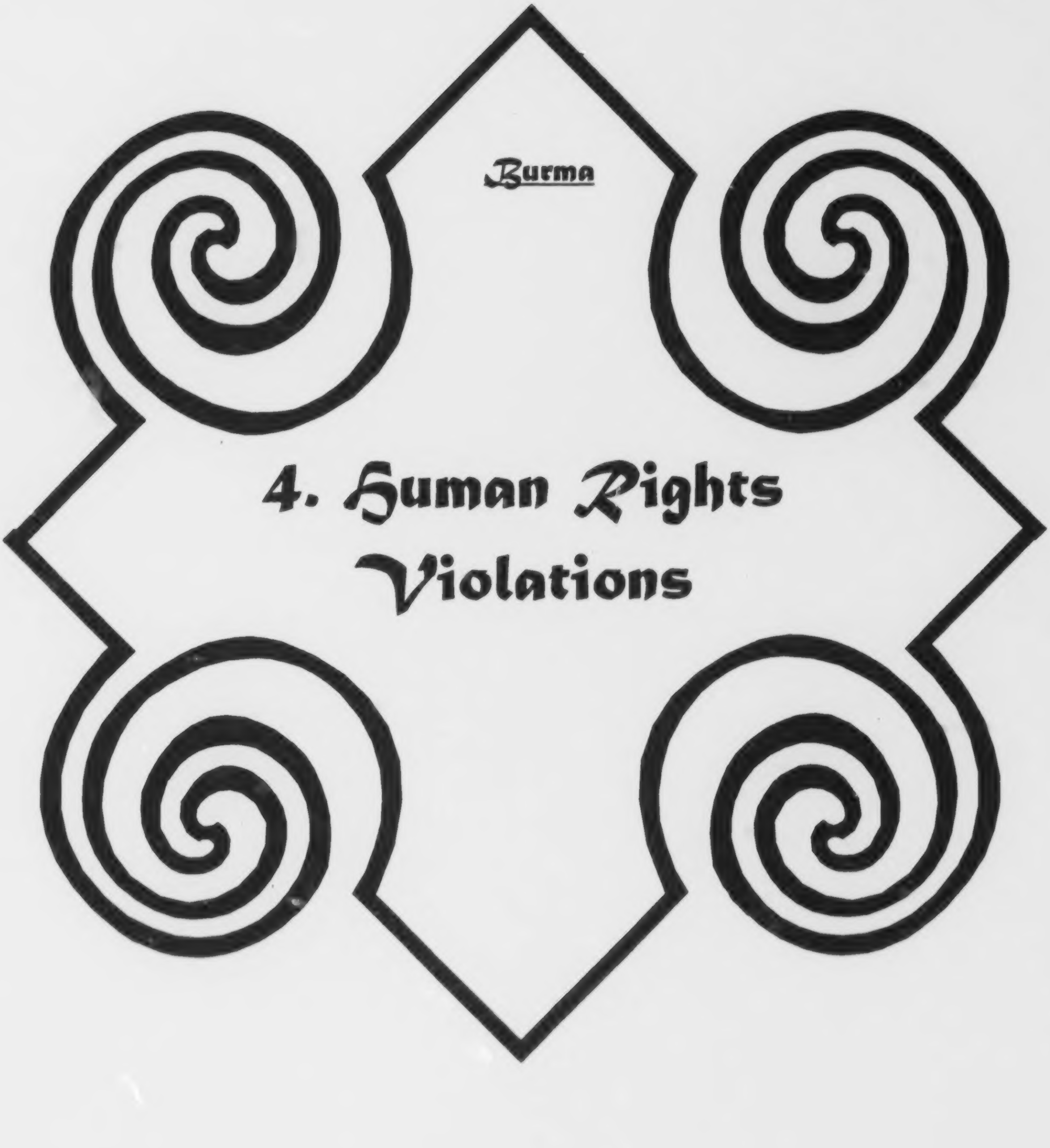
Remembering 1988

by zarni

Eight years have passed
Videoimages stiring up my thoughts
School children screaming and crying
Screaming out of fear
Fear for their lives
Fear of death
The death that was nearing
Older students fighting
Fighting back with curses
As their comrades fell
Against the bullets
The bullets that were flying
Flying into the crowd
The crowd of innocent children
The crowd of unarmed students
The crowd of peaceful monks
On the streets of Rangoon

Oh, you Big Soldiers,
Shooting courageously
Into the moral flesh
Thinking, "How dare you, people demand FREEDOM

Flow of blood
Moments of despair
Sound of machine guns firing
The price for Burmese freedom



Burma

4. Human Rights Violations

HUMAN RIGHTS from Soros Foundation Burma Project

Since an army coup overthrew Burma's last democratically-elected government in 1962, military-run or dominated regimes in Burma have been among the world's worst violators of human rights. An already serious level of abuses climbed higher after the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) (renamed the State Peace and Development Council in November 1997) seized power in September 1988. The junta removed all pretense of civilian administration and marked its arrival by massacring thousands of unarmed pro-democracy demonstrators in Rangoon and other Burmese cities and towns.

Reports by the United Nations, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other groups have repeatedly detailed a gruesome litany of abuses, including murder, torture, rape, detention without trial, massive forced relocations, and forced labor. Even before 1988, Burma's army faced allegations of serious human rights abuses, especially in its campaigns against ethnic groups along the country's borders. These severe violations continue today, including arbitrary executions and forced labor of villagers as military porters in combat zones. Children have been particularly hard hit, both as direct physical victims of military abuse and as members of affected families.

These gross violations are added to ongoing suppression of other fundamental freedoms. Today, the most basic of globally recognized civil and political rights are not respected by Burma's generals, despite the fact that Burma is signatory to several of the most important international human rights treaties. There is no freedom of expression. Even art exhibitions must be approved by military authorities. Beyond sports and romance magazines, the few independent publications that survive are subject to severe censorship. The regime's Press Scrutiny Board orders articles even obliquely critical of official actions inked over or torn from offending issues, while state newspapers are filled with crudely virulent attacks on democratic forces.

Broadcast media are even more closely controlled, and state radio and television, the only allowed, offer endless images of the junta's generals cutting ribbons and making speeches. In this context, it is hardly surprising that international radio stations such as the British Broadcasting Corporation, the Voice of America, and Radio Free Asia estimate that their Burmese audience is perhaps greater per capita than anywhere else in the world.

The junta's efforts to quash free expression continue. A 1996 SLORC decree provides up to 20 years' imprisonment for anyone publicly opposing the junta's policies. Under the 1996 "Computer Science Development Law," unlicensed possession of a fax machine or modem is punishable by 15 years in jail. These are among many repressive measures enforced without regard to international standards or Burma's own constitution. In Burma, the law is what the generals say it is; it can and does change from day to day.

Freedom of association and assembly are denied. Political gatherings are banned. Political parties such as the National League for Democracy (NLD) are closely monitored and its members harassed or arrested. Amnesty International estimates that in early 1998 at least 2,000 political prisoners were detained or imprisoned under severe conditions in Burmese jails. Many prisoners have died in detention. Among the current political prisoners are 39 people who were victorious candidates in May 1990 elections in which the NLD won over 80% of the seats.

Labor unions are not allowed to organize. The International Labor Organization has detailed allegations of widespread forced labor in Burma, often under dangerous conditions. Some of the worst abuses are today reported from southeastern Burma, where a billion-dollar pipeline is being built by a consortium of America's UNOCAL and France's TOTAL oil companies and the Burmese regime. In March 1997, the European Union withdrew Burma's trade privileges because of the prevalence of forced labor and other abuses.

Religious repression is another long-time feature of military rule. Burma is a predominantly Buddhist country, and the military regime demands that Buddhist clergy support its rule. Troops have invaded monasteries to remove Buddhist leaders who supported human rights and the democracy movement.

Burma also has sizable Muslim and Christian communities. Muslims in southwestern Burma are continuing targets for army attacks. Over a quarter million fled to Bangladesh during a major army offensive in 1989, and approximately 25,000 more escaped in 1997. Dozens of mosques were ransacked and destroyed as anti-Muslim riots reportedly instigated by the Burmese military flared in several Burmese cities in March 1997. Christian churches are also closely monitored by the army, and church activities country-wide are restricted. In some border areas, especially the Chin Special Division and the Karen State, churches have been wrecked by soldiers and religious differences exploited by the junta to promote discord among minority ethnic groups.

Human Rights Watch World Report 1998

BURMA

Respect for human rights in Burma continued to deteriorate relentlessly in 1997. The opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) continued to be a target of government repression. NLD leaders were prevented from making any public speeches during the year, and over 300 members were detained in May when they attempted to hold a party congress. There were no meetings during the year of the government's constitutional forum, the National Convention, which last met in March 1996; the convention was one of the only fora where Rangoon-based politicians and members of Burma's various ethnic movements could meet. The government tightened restrictions on freedom of expression, refusing visas to foreign journalists, deporting others and handing down long prison terms to anyone who attempted to collect information or contact groups abroad. Persecution of Muslims increased. Armed conflict continued between government troops and ethnic opposition forces in a number of areas, accompanied by human rights abuses such as forced portering, summary executions, rape, and torture. The ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) continued to deny access to U.N. Special Representative to Burma Rajsoomer Lallah. Despite its human rights practices, however, Burma was admitted as a full member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in July.

Human Rights Developments

In late January, the SLORC announced the sentencing of thirty-four people in connection with large-scale protests during the closing months of 1996. All were accused of being members of the defunct Communist Party of Burma and received a minimum of seven years' imprisonment. Eleven of those sentenced were NLD members. The end of 1996 had been marked by a series of student demonstrations, the first in five years, in Rangoon, Mandalay and other major cities. The demonstrations began in October as a protest over police beatings of three students from the Rangoon Institute of Technology and by early December had spread to the main Rangoon University campus where they grew to include 2,000 students and at least as many members of the public. Armed riot police and soldiers eventually stormed the crowd, arresting hundreds. On December 4, the government released a statement announcing that 609 people had been detained, of whom 487 were students and 122 were "agitators." The statement claimed that the students had all been released, but there was no information regarding the fate of those classified as agitators, nearly one hundred of whom were believed to remain in detention by the end of 1997.

During the December 1996 demonstrations the government had closed all educational institutions, from universities to primary schools, in Rangoon and in many other cities including Mandalay, Prome, Taunggyi, Moulmein and Sittwe, forcing the students to return to their homes. The dispersal of university students made it impossible to collect accurate information about arrests. The primary schools finally reopened seven months later, after the ASEAN meeting in July. As of November, most high schools, colleges and universities remained closed.

Military barricades set up in late 1996 on the road leading to the house of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi were maintained until May. After that, army checkpoints remained in place near the house, which was also the unofficial headquarters of the NLD, and at times of high tension the barricades themselves reappeared. For most of the year, Aung San Suu Kyi remained under virtual house arrest, having to ask for permission to leave her home in order to meet local and international media. Her phone line was frequently cut. Despite this, the NLD was allowed to hold three celebratory gatherings during the year in Daw Suu's home. On January 4, some 1,000 party members and guestsmarked the forty-ninth anniversary of Burma's independence. On February 12, the NLD held Union Day celebrations at the house, although a military barricade prevented at least half the guests from attending. In the days that followed, thirteen NLD members who had played a prominent role on the celebrations were reported to have been arrested, including Dr. Than Nyein, an NLD organizer and coincidentally the brother-in-law of the SLORC's top official, Secretary-1 Khin Nyunt. Than Nyein was later released, but his medical license was revoked. In April the NLD held New Year celebrations attended by some 600 supporters, all of whom had to register at the army checkpoint. The event raised funds for the families of NLD members in jail.

For the second year running, the NLD attempted to hold a party congress on the anniversary of the May 1990 election which it had won. Some 316 NLD members were prevented from attending the gathering, though few were actually detained. Those few were held in government guest houses for up to two weeks, while others were placed under temporary house arrest or otherwise warned not to go to Rangoon. Shortly thereafter, U Aye Win, Daw Suu's close adviser, was arrested. By November he remained without charge in unlawful detention in Insein jail in Rangoon and was in poor health, having spent long periods in the prison hospital after an operation in July.

On June 13, five NLD activists were arrested: U Ohn Myint an eighty-year-old party adviser; Khin Maung Win (known as Sonny), a photographer; Cho Aung Than, a cousin of Daw Suu; his sister Daw Khin Ma Than, and her husband U Myint Swe. U Ohn Myint was released after questioning, but on the same day trade unionists U Myo Aung Thant, U Khin Kyaw and his wife, all members of the exiled Free Trade Union of Burma (FTUB), were also arrested at Rangoon airport on arrival from Thailand. In a press conference on June 27, Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt accused the group of having collaborated with "overseas anti-government activists and advocates of destruction within the country" to bring in money for the NLD from overseas and to transmit information from Burma. He described them as puppets of the U.S. government. Myo Aung Thant and Khin Kyaw were also accused of smuggling in explosives in a rice cooker. On August 15 a court inside Insein prison sentenced Cho Aung Than, Daw Khin Ma Than, and U Myint Swe to ten years under the Unlawful Associations Act and the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act (EPA), section 5(e), which allows for seven years of imprisonment for anyone who "causes or intends to spread false news, knowing beforehand it is untrue." Myo Aung Thant was sentenced to life imprisonment for treason. The fates of Khin Maung Win and U Khin Kyaw were not known.

Other NLD members, elected members of parliament and supporters faced harassment and arrest from late 1996 through 1997. Over twenty NLD parliamentarians were forced to resign their seats. All had reportedly received threats that if they did not resign, members of their families would suffer reprisals ranging from arrest to permanent dismissal from public sector jobs. Seven members of parliament were arrested: U Hla Min, Saw Oo Reh, U Hla Myint, U Min Swe, U San Myint, U Tin Aung, U Saw Lwin, Dr. Hla Win, and Dr. Than Aung, bringing the number of elected parliamentarians in prison to thirty-three. At least fourteen NLD party organizers and activists, the majority from Irrawaddy division, were also arrested. Most were charged under the EPA; others were charged with criminal offenses, a tactic frequently used by the SLORC to discredit the opposition.

In July, in the only formal meeting during the year between the government and the opposition, Secretary-1 Khin Nyunt met with U Aung Shwe, NLD chairman. There were no other moves towards political reconciliation. On September 17, the NLD refused a further offer of talks because they did not include Aung San Suu Kyi.

On September 28, the NLD was permitted to hold a ceremony marking the ninth anniversary of the founding of the party. While the government gave express permission to allow 300 members to attend, some 700 were reported to have arrived at Daw Suu's house. All those attending had to give their personal details to military intelligence officers at the house, and some thirty NLD activists were denied permission to attend and were removed from the area.

Prison conditions remained poor and, in Myitkyina, Thayet, Myingyan and Tharrawaddy jails, reportedly deteriorated. U Tin Shwe, sixty-seven,a NLD central committee member, died on June 8 after nearly six years in Insein jail. The official report said he had died of heart disease in Rangoon General Hospital. During the year at least five political prisoners had to receive emergency medical treatment. Many of the most prominent political prisoners were transferred to jails far from their families, making visits difficult and the provision of extra food and medicines almost impossible.

On April 7, Cho Lay Oo, the daughter of Secretary-2 of the SLORC and Commander in Chief of the Army Lt. Gen. Tin Oo, was killed when she opened a parcel bomb sent to their home. It was the second bomb attack in four months; the first, on December 25,1996, had killed five people and injured seventeen at the World Peace Pagoda in Rangoon, shortly before Lt. Gen. Tin Oo arrived to pay his respects. The SLORC blamed both attacks on armed opposition groups, the exiled All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF) and the Karen Nation Union (KNU), and implicated the NLD as an "above-ground destructive element" with whom these groups were alleged to have contact. In May the government published an editorial in the official newspapers denying rumors that the bombs were a result of internal discord among military officers. By the end of the year, no arrests had been made in relation to either attack.

Muslims continued to be the target of discrimination throughout the country. On March 16, a group of monks in Mandalay provoked a confrontation at a mosque over the attempted rape of a Buddhist girl by a local Muslim, apparently in an attempt to whip up anti-Muslim sentiment. In the three days of riots that followed, four mosques and nearly 400 Muslim-owned shops and houses were destroyed. The violence spread to Rangoon, Sittwe, Moulmein and Prome, and in most areas eyewitnesses reported that security forces made no attempt to stop the rioters or to protect Muslims and their property. In Rangoon, seven mosques were attacked.

A disproportionately high number of Muslims joined ethnic Karen refugees fleeing Papun and Duplaya township during the year. Muslim refugees reported that soldiers had destroyed their mosques and schools and had ordered them to convert to Buddhism or leave the country. In Arakan state, refugees of the Rohingya Muslim minority returning from Bangladesh reported continued persecution by the Burmese military because of their race and religion. Some 270,000 Rohingyas had sought refuge in Bangladesh in 1991 and 1992. Of those who returned home, some 20,000 fled once again to Bangladesh in 1997.

By October, the number of internally displaced in Burma was estimated to be over 300,000. Forced relocations and a major military offensive against the KNU during the year drove some 150,000 people from their homes. Shan state, where over 100,000 people had been forced to leave their villages in 1996, was particularly hard-hit. The relocation program, aimed at cutting off support for ethnic rebels, was extended to new areas, and many of those displaced in 1996 were forced to move again to sites on the outskirts of government-controlled towns. The relocations were accompanied by killings, rape, and other forms of torture, and scores are believed to have died from malnutrition andrelated diseases due to poor conditions at the government-controlled sites. In other areas, relocated villagers were forced to work on road building projects. As many as 400 Shan villagers were reportedly killed by the Burmese army during May and June when they returned to collect food, or in reprisal attacks by the Burmese military after clashes with rebel soldiers. Others were killed by SLORC soldiers at the Thai border when they could not afford to bribe their way out of Burma.

Forced relocations also continued further south in Karenni state, where over one hundred villages had been removed during 1996. Conditions there remained dire, with the lack of sanitation, food and medical care leading to scores of deaths from malaria and other diseases. Villagers sent to the camps were forced to build fences around the periphery, turning the camps into virtual prisons. In July, eleven additional villages were forcibly relocated to Laikha district, bringing the total of displaced in Karenni state to over 25,000. Government efforts to block rice supplies coming into areas where rebels were active, combined with a sharp downturn in the Burmese economy and massive inflation, led to severe malnutrition in Shan, Karenni and Arakan states.

In Karen and Mon states and Tenasserim division, new fighting broke out in January after the failure of peace talks and the Karen National Union's continued support for Aung San Suu Kyi expressed in the Mae Tha Raw Hta statement of January 14, led to the major offensive against the KNU's last remaining strongholds. The offensive began on February 7, and by February 28 an estimated 80,000 Burmese troops had forced the KNU to abandon territory in these areas. Some 20,000 Karens fled to areas inside Burma or to Thailand in advance of the Burmese troops. In addition to displacement, Karen, Mon and Tavoyans living in these areas were subject to summary executions, arbitrary arrests, portering for the army and other forms of forced labor.

Even after fleeing to Thailand, Karenni and Karen refugees were not free from attack by Burmese government or government-backed groups. On January 3, a group of forty Burmese soldiers marched into a Karenni camp in Thailand's Mae Hong Son district and killed two people. Nine others were seriously injured. Four weeks later, members of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), a militia group backed by the government, attacked three Karen refugee camps further south in Thailand's Mae Sot district. Three refugees were killed in the attacks, and 7,000 refugees were left without shelter as parts of camps were razed. On April 27, the DKBA attacked Ta Per Poo camp in Thailand's Umphang district.

The Right to Monitor

The press remained under tight government control. No indigenous human rights organizations were permitted to form, and no international human rights groups were permitted to visit during the year.

On October 24, NLD organizer Kyow Din, who had been accused of passing on information to others that would cause "fear or alarm," died in a prison hospital. His death was attributed to natural causes, but his incarceration for his monitoring activites almost certainly contributed to his ill health. U.N. Special Rapporteur Rajsoomer Lallah was denied access to the country for the second straight year. Only NLD members were able to speak out against human rights abuses with some degree of freedom, but during the year it became increasingly difficult and dangerous for them and other Burmese to report on events in the country. Of the NLD members arrested during the year, many had appeared in international newspaper and television reports. Journalists themselves became the subject of attack, with photographer Myo Thant and his Japanese colleague, Shigefumi Takasuka, of the daily Yomiuri Shimbun , being badly beaten during the December 1996 demonstrations. Many other foreign journalists, especially those who had worked on Burma in the past, were denied visas during the year, and nine freelance journalists were deported.

Access to ethnic minority areas in particular remained very restricted. No U.N. agencies or international nongovernmental organizations were permitted to assist the displaced in the Shan, Karenni and Karen states, despite their requests to do so. Local church groups managed to provide some relief to the displaced, but did so without government permission.

In January, Burma's treatment of children came under scrutiny at the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The government sent a large delegation to Geneva in January to discuss with the committee its initial report on Burma's compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The leader of the delegation denied all allegations of human rights abuses against children. No nongovernmental organizations working in Burma, foreign or local, submitted reports to the committee for fear of government retaliation.

The Role of the International Community

The international community continued to be deeply divided between those countries advocating isolation of Burma and those calling for engagement. Limited economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. and Europe, and support within ASEAN for Burma's admission as a full member in the regional body, highlighted the difference in approach.

United Nations

Demands for an improvement in human rights and democratic accountability remained strong in the United Nations. The General Assembly in December 1996 and the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in March 1997 passed consensus resolutions calling on the SLORC to cooperate more with the U.N. system, particularly with the special rapporteur. In May, the U.N. secretary-general's representative, Alvaro de Soto, was permitted a four-day mission to Burma, where he met with the leaders of the NLD and other political parties as well as with Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt. He was not able to meet ethnic minority representatives, however, nor with other members of the SLORC.

In June, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) initiated a commission of inquiry into allegations of forced labor in Burma. Such a step had only been taken against nine countries in the ILO's seventy-eight-year history and, depending on the results of the inquiry, could lead to Burma's expulsion from the ILO. The commission was expected to investigate for one year and to hear testimony from victims of forced labor. The ILO was planning to seek access to Burma to verify allegations.

European Union

The European Union (E.U.) continued to maintain a ban on provision of arms and military equipment to Burma, kept military attachés out of its embassies in Burma, and continued its suspension of non-humanitarian aid. In late 1996, it added provisions which banned entry visas for senior members of the SLORC, their families, and others in the Burmese security forces who formulate, implement or benefit from policies"which impede Burma's transition to democracy." It also called for suspension of high-level bilateral governmental visits between officials of the E.U. and Burma.

In early November 1996, the European Commission tried to send a mission to Burma to investigate forced labor, but the Burmese government denied the mission entry, saying that since there was no forced labor in Burma, there would be nothing to investigate. In December, the commission approved a decision to cut Burma's low tariff access to the European Union market through the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program because of forced labor and said the cut, which affected industrial exports, would remain in force until forced labor was abolished. It was the first time the human rights clause of the European GSP program had been invoked. On March 25, following action in the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers suspended Burma's GSP benefits for agricultural products as well. On July 28, in his address before the E.U./ ASEAN Ministerial meeting, European Union Council President Jacques Poos announced that the E.U. had extended its common position on Burma that effectively prevented Burma from being included in the 1980 EC-ASEAN cooperation agreement.

In Britain, the newly elected Labour government, which had promised to put human rights at the heart of foreign policy, announced in June that it not only would continue the suspension of all government-sponsored trade tours to Burma but would actively discourage U.K. companies from investing there. In September, Foreign Minister Robin Cook also stated that despite having been accepted as a member of ASEAN, Burma would not be invited to attend the Asia-Europe meeting (ASEM) to take place in London in April 1998. In addition to these moves Western governments continued to give financial aid to Burmese refugees in camps in Thailand and Bangladesh, and European governments also gave aid to assist victims of severe flooding in Irrawaddy division in September.

United States and Canada

The U.S. also acted on human rights concerns. On October 2, 1996, the U.S. Senate passed the fiscal year 1998 Foreign Assistance Act, which included a provision giving the president authority to ban visas for all Burmese officials and to prohibit new investment by U.S. citizens or companies if the Burmese government physically harmed, rearrested or exiled Aung San Suu Kyi or committed large-scale repression against the political opposition. The visa restrictions were imposed the following day. Discussion continued on what constituted large-scale repression until April 22, when President Clinton announced his decision to impose the investment ban. As of October, however, the Treasury Department had yet to issue the implementing regulations.

Canada took similar action on August 7 when Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy announced the withdrawal of the General Preferential Tariff to Burma and a measure requiring all firms trading in Burma to apply for export permits. Axworthy also urged all Canadians to "refrain" from investing in Burma.

ASEAN

Western moves to pressure the SLORC for reform were offset by Burma's admission into ASEAN and by an increase in investment from ASEAN countries. In the run up to the ASEAN ministerial meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July, it was not clear whether Burma would be admitted, especially following the ASEAN decision to delay Cambodian membership. Regional nongovernmental organizations, members of parliament and other prominent groups, led by the Kim Dae Jung Foundation and the Alternative ASEAN network, protested Burma's imminent entry. But the sanctions enacted by the U.S. and E.U. prior to the meeting seemed only to harden ASEAN resolve to accept Burma as a full member and defy what was projected as an example of western imperialism. The Japanese government supported Burma's entry into ASEAN, while also warning that this should not provide "cover for oppression." Tokyo continued its ban on ODA (Official Development Assistance) to Rangoon and attempted to use the aid leverage as a carrot to promote improvements. (See Japan section for details.)

Relevant Human Rights Watch reports:

No Safety in Burma, No Sanctuary in Thailand, 7/97

Children's Rights and The Rule of Law, 1/97

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EXECUTIONS

(I) EXTRA-JUDICIAL, SUMMARY OR ARBITRARY EXECUTIONS

1.1. Background

While military tribunals are no longer handing out death sentences on civilians, the number of executions in Burma has not decreased. Most incidents show a tendency for executions through forced portering which involved human mine-sweeping and acting as human bullet shields in combat zones. Porters also have been severely beaten, not fed enough food and left along the wayside to die. When porters are ill or exhausted because of heavy burden and unable to keep up on march, they were executed or abandoned without any food or medical care. Many villagers are hiding in the jungle in order to avoid SLORC Army's forced relocation scheme and being herded into concentration camps. These hidden villages are regarded by SLORC as rebel villages and there are cases of firing to villagers when they were faced with SLORC Army.

Victims of summary executions are in many cases villagers who are accused of being having communication with insurgency groups despite the lack of proper evidence. Women are commonly killed by soldiers after being raped, for fear that the victims of these double crimes will report or publicise the sexual assaults.

Arbitrary executions could be taken place anywhere and at any time, by military leaders as well as rank and file. People who run awy from the military even in cities in fear of being forced into portering, are often shot at without regard for their lives.

Recent arbitrary executions also include prisoners being tortured to death while in custody, beatings, denial of adequate food and medical care, and subhuman conditions in prisons. Executions of all kinds have focused particularly on ethnic peoples, in most cases only because of their ethnic backgrounds.

1.2. Death in Custody

1.2.1. U Dhamma Wara Seit-Dhi, a 51 years old monk from Mandalay, reportedly died from malnutrition and malaria on 18 November 1994. He had been arrested for his participation in the 1988-89 pro-democracy movement and sentenced to five years' hard labour in the Kachin State. Hundreds of monks were arrested for their role in protest demonstrations and scores are believed to be still detained. After working on a road in a malaria area, U Dhamma Wara Seit-Dhi died after reported attacks of malaria. *[Source: AI]*

1.2.2. U Kin Sein, in his 50's, died in Insein Prison in early 1995 of an unknown disease. He was reportedly arrested in December 1990 and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment under Section 5 (j) of the Emergency Provisions Act. A member of the Prome Township People's Progressive Party, he was also a businessman. [*Source: AI*]

1.3. SLORC Pressures Parents and Kills Students

Since the beginning of 1995, SLORC troops under the command of South-eastern Command, have been putting pressure on the parents and relatives of the students who are involved in the democratic movement, to meet and "return" their children to the legal fold. In a recent example, Maung Paw Oo, age 25, and Maung Aung Swan, age 21, were arrested by SLORC troops on 16 May 1995 near Kyauk Thinbaw fishing village, Palaw Township, Tenasserim Division. The students were on their way to meet with their parents and relatives after receiving the families' invitations.

The two victims were then brought into a nearby fishing vessel and interrogated by SLORC soldiers. There they were subjected to various forms of torture, including repeated knife incisions. Eventually they lost consciousness because of the continuous cutting. On the following day, it was reported that both of the students were buried alive in the boat's freezing room. *[Source: ABSDF]*

1.4. List of Incidents

1.4.1. At 11:00 p.m. on 4 October 1994, Pvt Khin Maung Myint who was responsible for sentry-duty of LIB 408, was found asleep and kicked and punched by Lt Than Zaw, officer-on-duty. Unable to endure further beatings, Khin Maung Myint shot dead Lt Than Zaw with his gun, causing Than Zaw to die on the spot. Pvt Khin Maung Myint was sentenced to death by officers from LIB 408 and gunned to death over night. *[Source: KNU]*

1.4.2. Twelve villagers from different villages in Paletwa and Kyauktaw townships in the northern part of Arakan State, located in the triangle area of Indo-Burmese-Bangladeshi border, were arrested and later inhumanly executed by Coy 2 of SLORC B 376 commanded by Capt Tun Wei and Lt Tun Myint after being accused of having contact with the Arakanese rebels. Their eyes were gouged and hands were cut. Of them 8 victims were identified as:

Table 1.. Physical Mutilations and Murders in Paletwa and Kyauktaw Townships

Name	Age	Name of Village	Date of killing
Mr. Rammado (village headman)	48	Loungadu	31/12/94
U Nga Mae Che (village headman)	46	Taung-roa	11/04/95
U Oung Zan Oo (Secretary of village council)	54	Taung-roa	11/04/95
Maung Shwe Doot	25	Taung-roa	11/04/95
Mejir	33	Taung-roa	
U Tha Maung (village headman)	55	Setpaik-pron	15/04/95
Hla Han	28	Setpaik-pron	16/04/95
U Maung Fru	46	Trawan-ai	

[Source: ASC]

1.4.3. At 1:00 p.m. on 10 February 1995, a villager was back at Klaw Hta village, Papun District in Karen State, to retrieve some belongings. SLORC troops arrived at the village, saw him and shot him in the belly. The bullet went through his body, but the villager did not die on the spot. The SLORC troops went up to him, tortured and then stabbed him to death with a knife. The SLORC officer responsible was Bo Chit Aung, a Coy Comdr from IB 19. *[Source: KHRG]*

1.4.4. In February 1995, the SLORC troops entered Tar Meh Der, Tar Paw Der, Tee Thoo Der and Thay Ko Mu Der villages in Papun District and killed several villagers and destroyed all those villages, leaving 19 families with 98 people with no food at all. *[Source: KNU]*

1.4.5. On 1 March 1995, a group of 32 armed men from DKBA ransacked Ka Law Hta village, Kwee Lay village-tract in Bilin Township, Mon State, and shot dead 5 innocent villagers. Among the victims were wife of U Maung Ni and Naw Mya Shay from Kyet Taung Seik village near Naw Ta, Hlaingbwe Township, Karen State. Moreover, the soldiers plundered valuable possessions from the villagers. *[Source: NLD-LA]*

1.4.6. On 3 March 1995, a villager (name not provided), who was heading home at Bu Lo Klo in Papun District, Karen State, was seen by SLORC troops between Bwa Ghaw and his village and shot dead by the soldiers. *[Source: KHRG]*

1.4.7. On 5 March 1995, a villager went to Ka Nah Der village, Papun District, Karen State, to find out news about the position of SLORC troops in the area so that he could inform the other villagers who were hiding in the forest. SLORC saw him there and shot him in the thigh. His thigh was broken. When they knew that he was still alive, they stabbed him to death with a knife. The officer responsible was a platoon commander from IB 19. *[Source: KHRG]*

1.4.8. On 10 March 1995, a villager (name not provided) returned to Toe Muh Der village, Bwa Der area in Papun District, Karen State, to thresh some paddy. While he was threshing, SLORC troops from LID 99 arrived and shot him to death. *[Source: KHRG]*

1.4.9. On 15 March 1995, during a Christian religious festival at Pu Wut village, Palaw Township, Tenasserim Division, an intoxicated sergeant from IB 101 insulted a driver, leading a nearby lance corporal to outage and he killed the sergeant. The intelligence unit in Palaw arrested the lance corporal and immediately executed him on the way. *[Source: KNU]*

1.4.10. On 18 March 1995, 80 SLORC troops from LIB 525 and IB 71 from Kengtung stopped and took rest at Mui Taw village, Kengtong village-tract, Mong Nai Township. At 8:30 p.m., Sai Kan Na (36, son of headman Ing Ta and Pa Ku) and Sai Kham Mun (alias) Su Zar La came back from their farms on a bullock cart. As they did not know that SLORC troops were there, the villagers entered the village. Then they were surrounded and forced to get off the cart by the soldiers. Sai Kham Mun, pretending to lift the front of the cart, ran away and managed to escape. When the soldiers searched the cart, they found an old World War II rifle that did not work properly. The soldiers then accused Sai Kan Na of being a Shan soldier, and struck his head with a stick so violently, causing him to die on the spot.

That night the SLORC soldiers took the corpse of Sai Kan Na out of the village secretly and buried near a footpath to a farm on the eastern side of the village, covering it with dry leaves. They then left the village. They took Sai Kan Na's bullock cart away to carry their things, together with 15 viss of fish and a pig, which were already on it.

At 3 p.m. on 21 March, the villagers searched for and dug up the corpse. They then re-buried it at a proper place. *[Source: S.H.A.N]*

1.4.11. On 20 March 1995, combined troops of DKBA and SLORC entered Da Oo Kee village in Bilin Township, Mon State, and shot dead Saw Mya Po, 20 years old. Pa Mer Ler and Saw Po Kee were among the DKBA soldiers who came along with the SLORC troops. *[Source: KHRG]*

1.4.12. On 21 March 1995, SLORC troops arrived at Tee Klu Hat village in Papun District, Karen State, captured a village man (name not provided), tortured him and stabbed him to death with a knife. *[Source: KHRG]*

1.4.13. In March 1995, DKBA troops penetrated Tee Lay Kaw village in Bilin Township, Mon State, and shot dead two women. One of them was from Yo Klah village and her child was still being breast-fed. Pa Mer Ler, a DKBA soldier, also penetrated Tee Si Baw village in Bilin Township and when he saw some villagers he called them. They didn't hear him and he shot at them. *[Source: KHRG]*

1.4.14. In April 1995, SLORC troops from IB 67 raided Warn Nam Lin village, Mong Heng village-tract, Mong Yang Township in northern Shan State and shot dead Loong Or (55, son of Loong Ti and Nai Loi Tsing), Loong Hkam Sorn (56, son of Loong Tun and Naii Loo), Nang Sar (30, daughter of Loong Hkam Sorn) and Sarng Parn (32, son of Loong Moan and Naii Lig). *[Source: S.H.A.N]*

1.4.15. On 9 April 1995, a joint military column of DKBA and SLORC troops led by Capt Tin Maung Win from 1st MSC of South Eastern Command entered Zegon village in Bilin Township, Mon State, and shot Maung Yit (aka) Phar Toe Kae (23, son of U New War) and Ma Win Htay (23, daughter of U Kyaw Din) to death. The victims died on the spot. *[Source: ABSDF]*

1.4.16. On 10 April 1995, a joint military column of DKBA and SLORC troops led by Capt Tin Maung Win from 1st MSC of South Eastern Command [see 1.4.15. above] entered Mae Pa Li village, Bilin Township, and repeatedly shot at the villagers. As a consequence, Saw Bu Ghay (23, son of Pyu Wah), Saw Win Thein (23, son of Oe Kyi Dee) and Maung Myint Oo (20, son of Phar Noe) were killed, leaving the people there living in a state of fear. The first two were from Zee Gone village and Maung Myint Yi, a mahout in Mae Pa Li village, both in Bilin Township. *[Source: ABSDF/KHRG]*

1.4.17. On 16 April 1995, a group of 10 soldiers from SLORC LIB 433 led by Cpl Hla Win together with People's Militia from Za Yat village, Mergui District, Tenasserim Division, opened fire on Tin-Aung-Moe passenger boat in which 400 passengers were on board. U Kyaw Win and Ma Aye Kyaing who were on the boat were killed. Local people and passengers on the boat notified the nearest police station about the incident. But when the police learned the shooting was done by the SLORC army, they took no action. *[Source: KHRG]*

1.4.18. Around midnight on 18 April 1995, about 30 SLORC troops led by Maj Lha Kyoo of LIB 248 from Mong Nai arrived at Nar Lin village, arrested Sai Ti Ya, a villager, and tortured him. The soldiers cut his thighs and back with a knife and then applied salt in the wounds. They accused the victim of being an MTA soldier and interrogated him about MTA. Then the soldiers kicked and beat him to death. *[Source: S.H.A.N]*

1.4.19. In the last week of May 1995, SLORC troops from IB 67 of Mong Yai arrived at Koon Morng village, Mong Tom village-tract in Tanyan Township. On arrival at Na-tur-leng near Korn Morng, they captured Sai Aung Pa, (35, husband of Nang Lee, 30, and son of Loong Pang Tsoom and Naii Purng), tied him up and dragged him to Loi Yurng Loi Lao, near a Palaung village named Wein Kwaii.

The soldiers interrogated the victim about MTA and beat him violently. The soldiers then hanged him alive in a hut where the hay was stored. When the local Palaung villagers found the victim later, he had been stung to death and eaten by black hornets. *[Source: S.H.A.N]*

Introduction to Education International's Barometer Report

The dictionary definition of barometer is "an instrument for measuring atmospheric pressure, usually to determine weather changes", or "anything that shows change or impending change". [Collins English Dictionary Updated Edition, 1995]

Education International's 1998 Barometer on Trade Union and Human Rights in the Educator Sector focuses on three fundamental human rights - the right to education, children's right to be protected from exploitation and workers right to form and join trade unions, to organise and to bargain collectively. This Barometer establishes an initial base against which we hope to be able to measure change over the next ten years and beyond in the new millennium. Making change is more important, however, than monitoring change. This, and successive editions, will, we hope, help set priorities and galvanise EI and its member organisations into further action.

Education Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948, stated unequivocally in Article 26 (1):

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

This survey shows that in 1998 millions of children are still denied access even to basic education. In some places the situation has actually deteriorated in the last ten years.

The Barometer has chosen eight indicators from the mass of statistical information provided by UNESCO in the World education report 1998. Those indicators are:

- illiteracy - the estimated number of adults (15 years and over) expressed as a percentage of the population in the corresponding age group;
- school life expectancy - the number of years that a child is expected to remain at school
- net enrolment first level - the percentage of children in the official school age of primary education who are enrolled in primary school);
- % of 1994 cohort reaching grade 5 - percentage of children starting primary school who eventually attain Grade 5;
- primary pupil teacher ratio - the average number of pupils per teacher at the primary level;
- tertiary students per 100,000 inhabitants - number of students enrolled in tertiary (or higher education) per 100,000 inhabitants;
- % of GNP spent on education - total public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of the Gross National Product;
- % of Government expenditure on education - total public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of total government expenditure.

Unless otherwise noted the figures are for 1995. This is the latest data available from UNESCO. For comparative purposes the use of one official source provides a greater level of consistency than the use of multiple sources including national records.

The 1998 Barometer does not include any data for early childhood education. We hope to do so in future years.

The text on education rights notes whether schooling is compulsory and up to what levels. Wherever information has been readily available, a short description of the education system is included. We hope that member organizations will be able to provide further information to enable the gaps to be filled in later editions.

Access to education is about quantity and quality. There cannot be access for all unless there is a sufficient number of places. In terms of basic education, (primary and lower secondary), there needs to be enough schools and classrooms and they have to be in the right place. Lack of schools in the village or neighbourhood is a significant impediment to girls getting access to education. Families are often even more reluctant to allow girls to travel any distance than they are boys. For many Indigenous communities sending their children away to school is difficult because of the impact it has on their knowledge of their own languages, culture and way of life.

Quality affects access in many ways. Poor families struggling to survive will not send their children to school if they cannot see that the curriculum is relevant to their lives and that education will provide them with the knowledge and skills they require to improve their living standards. Where class sizes are too large and teachers cannot provide the necessary individual attention and support, the most disadvantaged children will be amongst those who drop out.

UNESCO's International Commission for the Twenty-first Century recommended that States devote six percent of their GNP to education. UNESCO's World education report 1998, from which the Barometer's figures on expenditure are drawn, shows that 96 out of 130 countries for which statistics were available, spent less than six percent of GNP on education and one sixth of those countries devoted less than three percent of GNP to education.

Child labour

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNICEF estimate that there are 250 million child labourers around the world.

By child labour we mean any work that endangers a child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development or that interferes with his or her education and schooling.

Some have claimed that trade unions and other opponents of child labour want to stop children helping with the housework or on the farm or earning a little money for themselves or their family after school and during the holidays. Children gain great deal by helping out at home and working with others. It is all part of growing up.

But when work hurts rather than helps them, children's work becomes child labour.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989 and came into force on 2 September 1990. Like the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, it recognizes the right of the child to education. It also provides for the elimination of child labour. Article 32 (1) states:

States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

ILO Convention 138 is the Minimum Age Convention, 1973. It sets a basic minimum age of 15 for starting work (or older if the age of ending compulsory schooling is older). Light work is allowed between the ages of 13 and 15, and dangerous work is forbidden to anyone under 18 years old. The Convention also provides for exceptional cases where these age limits may be slightly lower.

Most countries have laws against child labour. The 1998 Barometer states what those laws are and describes the extent to which they are observed in practice. Information was drawn primarily from the United States Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1997, from ILO sources and from ICFTU reports prepared for the World Trade Organisation on a country's compliance with the core ILO labour standards.

What emerges from this survey, not surprisingly, is the strong correlation between poor access to education and high levels of child labour. Where developing countries have provided compulsory, free, basic education child labour is not a problem. Where they have not, it is. Countries in Africa and Asia, with a few notable exceptions, are facing a crisis that has been building over a number of years and is intensifying, in the case of Asia, as a result of the recent economic collapse. No region of the world can be complacent. Child labour has also grown in the developed world in the past decade. The Barometer also highlights examples of campaigns and programs involving EI member organizations that are making a real contribution to the elimination of child labour.

The best contribution we could make, however, is to ensure compulsory, free, basic education that is of good quality, for every child.

Trade Union Rights

The Barometer highlights the ILO Conventions which provide for fundamental labour rights and Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. The core Conventions cover Forced Labour (No. 29), Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (No. 87), Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining (No.98), Equal Remuneration (100), Abolition of Forced Labour (No.105), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), and Minimum Age (No. 138).

The section on trade union rights summarises the extent of trade union rights generally in each country. Most of this information was drawn from the ICFTU Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights and the U.S. State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1997. It then focuses on whether teachers and other education personnel have the right to form and join unions - freedom of association - and the right to organise, to bargain collectively and to strike. This section draws on EI's files and reports.

There can be no constructive and durable solutions to problems facing education without respect for the basic rights of educators. Full trade union rights are vital to provide teachers with salaries and conditions of work that permit them to fulfil their responsibilities and to live with dignity.

There are still countries that do not allow education personnel to exercise their fundamental rights. Denial of the right to freedom of association is most common in the higher education sector. School principals are another group whose rights to be members of the organisation of their choosing are under attack.

Non-interference in the running of union activities is a right guaranteed as part of freedom of association. The Barometer records a number of countries where being a teacher trade unionist is extremely hazardous. Threats, intimidation, physical violence, murder, arrest, torture, and imprisonment have been used to silence them.

Collective bargaining barely exists in some countries and is under attack in others, including in a number of industrialised countries. Seventy per cent of EI members live at or below the poverty level. Conditions of service are often appalling.

Finding strategies to ensure that the human and trade union rights of teachers and other education staff are fully respected is vital. Only then will the teaching profession be able to exercise its responsibilities to the full and provide high quality education for all. EI hopes that the Barometer will be a useful tool in that process.

5. Child Abuse

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THE SITUATION FOR CHILDREN IN BURMA

In Burma, the participation of children in armed conflict has become routine, as the country has been at war for the majority of this century. Any visitor to the central urban areas, or to the border regions where most of the civil war's battles take place, can see heavily-armed teenage boys toting automatic weapons: standing sentry duty at the Mandalay railway station, guarding the base-camps of Taunggyi, lounging in the markets of Rangoon, drilling on parade-grounds on the Thai-Burmese border, and fighting in the front-lines. Since 1948, Burma has been home to one of the most complicated civil conflicts in the world. This conflict has given rise to over seventy military groups, of which twenty-eight are known still to bear arms.[1] Since 1989, the State Law and Order Restoration council (SLORC) has agreed on cease-fires with 15 armed ethnic minority groups, including most recently, the Mon and Karenni. However the SLORC often refers to them as having "returned to the legal fold" even when there have been no comprehensive peace settlements.[2] Although most of these predominantly ethnic groups have made cease-fires with the Burmese army or *Tatmadaw,* these peace agreements remain unstable, and, as in the case of the Karenni KNPP in 1995, in some cases they have been broken down entirely, and fighting has resumed.

Although international law forbids the use of children under the age of fifteen as soldiers, almost all of the Burmese groups with which the authors and their organizations work alongside have child soldiers within their ranks, as does the Tatmadaw under the control of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). Although all parties to the conflict in Burma use child soldiers, the treatment of them, recruitment methods and conditions of service, vary a great deal both between, and within, these armed groups. In the experiences of the researchers, the treatment of child soldiers in the Tatmadaw deserves separate treatment, because it is so much more severe than that of other groups.

The widespread use of child soldiers has ensured that many thousands of children in Burma have suffered exceptional cruelty during the war: many child soldiers have been killed or wounded, or have witnessed terrible atrocities. Many children have taken part in these human rights abuses themselves. The youngest SLORC child soldier interviewed for this report joined at 12, however eyewitnesses of battles recount stories of inductees as young as 10.

It is currently impossible to obtain figures on the numbers of child soldiers fighting with the Tatmadaw, due to a great number of geographical, logistical, and political reasons, not the least of which is the SLORC's desire to conceal the strengths of child troops. However most observers agree that many of the troop numbers are made up mainly of very young people. It is equally as difficult to obtain numbers of deaths, and statistics on injuries of child soldiers, given the time constraints in researching this report, and the inaccessibility of medical and military statistics and records. Although the Tatmadaw require all recruits to be seventeen years old officially, the researchers have interviewed a number SLORC defectors who were forced, told to, or advised to falsify their ages for their records, by SLORC officers themselves.

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[1] Lintner: 1995: 422-437

[2] Amnesty International: "No Law at All": 1995: 18

The use of children as soldiers in Burma results in serious human rights abuses. Children are killed, forcibly conscripted, unwillingly separated from their families, kidnapped, tortured during their service, forced to kill and torture, and due to the rampant corruption in the military, are underpaid, or are not paid at all. As one ABSDF soldier stated of the situation of children in Burma:
"They are forced to grow up too quickly."
(IA: Ma Mi Suu Pwint: June '95)

The phenomenon of child soldiers in Burma can only be understood within the context of militarization of the society as a whole. UNICEF view the situation of children in Burma with grave concern. In 1992 they produced a confidential draft report in the hope of a peace initiative by the UN, the contents of which were leaked, and the plan subsequently discarded. It stated:

"Many children are orphaned, abandoned, trafficked, exploited in the labor force, institutionalized or jailed. Some are used in drug-running, while others are targets of ethnic discrimination. In the civil war, children have become victims or participants in armed conflicts, at times used as porters, human shields or human mine-sweepers."[3] [emphasis added]

Largely due to the "Burmese way to socialism", a disastrous economic plan implemented by the Burmese Socialist Program Party, between 1962 and 1988, the country was finally accorded Least Developed Country status by the UN in 1987. In recent years, the SLORC have abandoned this program and implemented an 'open door' policy to foreign investment, a significant step for a formerly isolationist country. Yet most of the finance accrued from this foreign trade and investment is used for and by the SLORC and Tatmadaw in arms acquisitions. Although Burma has no external enemies at this time, over the last five years the junta has purchased billions of dollars of armaments, mainly from China. According to most observers this massive arms build-up is aimed at crushing ethnic unrest, and suppressing any further dissent from the Burman populace.

According to Anti-Slavery International, children in Burma are suffering extreme deprivation and exploitation:

There is little welfare support, even for those who have lost parents in the armed conflict. Less than twenty percent of schoolchildren complete more than four grades of primary school, and across the country many children enjoy no childhood at all: they are simply put to work."[4] [emphasis added]

Children in Burma suffer extreme poverty, with Burma being the seventh poorest nation in the world. Although children under five make up only 15% of the population, they account for half the country's annual death rate. Infant mortality is estimated at 146/1000, with 175,000 under 5 dying every year.[5] Most of these deaths are due to easily preventable or treatable diseases, including malaria.[6] Moreover, 14% of children under three suffer from severe malnutrition.[7] In the ethnic border areas the situation is worse.

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[3] UNICEF draft document for "Contributions to an Inegrated United Nations Peace and Development Initiative in Myanmar": 1992: 2

[4] Smith/ASI: 1994: 119

[5] UNDP Assistance to Myanmar, 1994-1995 Report: 1

"In the most remote border areas, some ethnic communities have had virtually no public services because of armed conflicts and problems of accessibility."[8]

No comprehensive survey of health conditions in border areas has been possible over the last five decades because of continuous conflict. Medical agencies working in the border region report that the infant mortality rate is extremely high, due mainly to endemic malaria, widespread dysentery, and malnutrition. Medicines are rare and expensive, and usually administered by "quack" doctors.

Many Burmese children leave their homes for neighboring countries to work, as the employment and economic situation inside Burma is so poor. It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of these children are currently exploited in forced labor situations such as sweatshops, and in prostitution in Asian countries in the region such as Thailand.[9] UNICEF estimate that over 40,000 Burmese children are working in Thailand's sex industry.[10] Estimates by NGOs working on the ground are even higher. For many children, joining the armed forces of any of the warring parties is often the only means of survival.

It should be noted that Burma's military history plays an important psychological part in encouraging children to become involved in the military. This is due to the prominent role that General Aung San played in liberating the country from the British and Japanese occupations the Burman public have turned him into an idolized national hero. Children, especially young boys, are raised to revere military leaders of the past, and to look on military induction as a sign of manhood. In much of the popular media, the soldier is held up as the perfect role-model. Particularly among the ethnic groups, where many children grow up watching their fathers go to war, as their families and villages are tyrannized by the Tatmadaw, devotion to the revolutionary cause is seen as the highest calling to which one can aspire. The ethnic groups also have revered leaders, that children are taught to adore, and often fear, from an early age. To be a soldier is to occupy a position of great honor and self-sacrifice. The emotional pull of such prestige should not be underestimated.

Although most of the warring factions in Burma have forcibly recruited some children, most of the children we know of joined the ethnic armies voluntarily, usually because they saw no other way to survive. Children say that they joined for various reasons: to avenge the killings of family and friends, to protect their families and communities from the opposition army or armies, or to get food for themselves, and in some cases, for their families. Not infrequently, when the child's family had been killed, there was no one left to take care of them. They therefore took the only option that they thought open to them, to join a military force, ethnic or Burman. Ethnic military leaders state that many child soldiers, both volunteers and recruits, are orphans. Some ethnic armies and the Tatmadaw are known to have institutions to train these orphans as child soldiers. Others claim that orphans often volunteer due to a lack of other options.

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[6] UNICEF: 2

[7] UNICEF: 2

[8] ESCAP/UNICF Myanmar Country Programme Recommendation: 1992: 2

[9] Asiawatch Report: 1994

[10] UNICEF: 1992: 3

Since 1988 and the beginning of the military's rapid growth, the Tatmadaw have begun recruiting boys at fourteen and below. UNICEF officials even found out that boys could be 'officially conscripted' into the military at fourteen. These boys are placed in training centers where they receive military style education. Designated the "Ye-Nyunt Youth," the boys are also said to receive political training, and are taught to be loyal to the government and the army. They are eventually assigned to serve in the army, in intelligence units, or as security for high-ranking officers. Most of these recruits tend to be orphans, street children, children captured from enemy positions or those abandoned in front-line villages. Anecdotal reports exist of such children being taken to places like Pegu, Prome, and Mandalay, cities at some distance from their homes, before they are forced into armed service. UNICEF also identified at least one residential SLORC military camp, near Kengtung in Shan State, where children aged seven and above (believed to be orphans) were being trained for a future life with the military.[11]

Ethnic armies such as the Mong Tai Army (MTA) in Shan State, formerly controlled by notorious drug warlord Khun Sa, had similar institutions. In Ho Mong, headquarters of the MTA, "Tiger Camp" served a comparable purpose. Young orphans, and some who are sent by their parents receive a basic education in exchange for military service later. As a Shan MTA commander commented to one of the researchers in Ho Mong in January 1994,

"What choice have they got? Opium addicts and sellers, Burmese soldiers or porters, farmers always harassed by the military?... These children make more disciplined, brave and ... nationalistic soldiers... They make the best fighters."
(IA: name unknown: December 1994).

Some ethnic military commanders claim that child soldiers are more obedient, do not question orders, and are easier to manipulate than adult soldiers. Others, however, state that child soldiers are still children, and that they often misbehave, are unruly, and require frequent scolding, as young boys usually do. One captain claimed that child soldiers often had to be taught the most basic life skills, such as how to wash, cook and take care of themselves. He believed that the use of child soldiers was more of a hindrance to battle than a help. One point is clear, that most child soldiers interviewed for this survey seemed to either fear or revere their commanders, and stated that they would follow their every order. Fear is a major determining factor in their obedience and performance. However in extreme cases, when child soldiers could no longer tolerate their own, or others', mistreatment by their senior officers, they were driven to either suicide or murder.

Although all armed sides in the conflict use child soldiers in their forces, the differences between the children's recruitment reasons, treatment, duties, and post-service situations, with each side vary significantly. Not only are there differences between child soldiers experiences with each army, there are also variances from region to region, and command to command. It is, however, apparent in all the ethnic armed forces and the Tatmadaw, when an impending large-scale battle is approaching more child soldiers are recruited and used in the front-lines as more man-power is required.

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[11] Smith/ASI: 1994: 118

Children have played various other roles in the conflict: they have performed front-line/active combat duties, done cooking and other menial labor, stood sentry/check-point duty, acted as body-guards (a feature common to the ethnic armies especially), served as porters carrying ammunition and supplies, and been used as cannon fodder to draw the fire of their adversaries, and sometimes in human-wave attack tactics in which hundreds have been killed. Most child soldiers on all sides of the conflict are male, and neither the researchers nor ethnic combatants interviewed for this report were aware of the use of female child soldiers in combat situations. Some of the armies do, however, have female recruits.

Military training makes a poor replacement for civilian education, even in a country where most schooling is sub-standard. In Burma, education in government schools, where parents must supply all school materials, is a luxury. An estimated 80% of students enrolling in primary school drop-out before completion.[12] Some 35% of children never enroll in primary school and only 25% complete the five year cycle.[13] Ethnic border regions are severely under-serviced. Even in areas where some groups operate schools independent of the central Burmese regime, education systems are routinely disrupted when villages are forced to relocate due to the conflict. Many child soldiers come from poor families or are in fact orphans, and many have barely started their schooling before it is interrupted by military duty. Military training under the auspices of different armed groups varies in length and content, however it can be stated unequivocally that most child soldiers do not receive significant instruction to enhance literacy or vocational and occupational skills. Lack of educational opportunity for young recruits has significant ramifications for their post-military futures, and indeed, portends difficult prospects for Burma's economic and social development.

Despite the fact that many children join the army seeking benefits for themselves or their families, almost all interviewed told of receiving inadequate food and clothing, and few received benefits for their families. Most Tatmadaw soldiers also spoke of being regularly punished, and often of being beaten and abused by their senior officers. In addition, while it is sometimes believed that children are less cognizant of atrocity and death, the child soldiers interviewed for this report made frequent reference to the fear, despair, and horror they felt, especially when they were ordered to beat porters, witnessed rapes committed by their senior officers, or engaged in combat situations. As there is no formal demobilization procedure in most of Burma's armed groups, and little understanding of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder counseling, the physical and mental scars these young soldiers bear again bode ill, for their own futures and for that of the country.

Burma acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991. At the same time, they signed the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children. The National Program of Action (NPA) for the Survival, Protection, and Development of Myanmar's Children in the 1990s was completed in September 1993. In 1993, the SLORC also promulgated the Child Law for the country and established an Intersectoral

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[12] Ministry of Education/UNDP/UNESCO Education Sector Study: 1992: iii

[13] UNICEF: January 1995: 37

Committee on the Rights of the Child. These could serve as a hopeful sign, that there are mechanisms in place which can be used to improve the situation for children in the country.

Despite the SLORC's extraordinary initial reservations to the UN Convention, (Article 37: prohibiting the use of torture or other inhumane treatment, and Article 15: the right to free association and assembly, which were both withdrawn after condemnation from the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in the ECOSOC report of 1994), the move has broadened the UN mandate inside the country concerning human rights, and the issue of child soldiers. However, as previously stated, from our research the SLORC continue to use child soldiers, more so now than ever before due to the swelling of the numbers of the Tatmadaw in recent years. We recommend that in future, more research be conducted from inside the country, with defectors in the border areas, and with child soldiers in ethnic armies, to clarify whether these commitments to international instruments are effecting real change with the country. In this report we hope to describe the context in which many boys become child soldiers, and to document their experiences.

THE MASS DEFECTION

For one group of child soldiers, the abuses they suffered became so degrading and unbearable that they were driven to kill three of their senior officers before defecting to areas controlled by opposition forces. Under the guidance of a 22 year old, who himself had joined the army when he was 16, the group of ten teenagers plotted the murders and fled together. Although their interviews have also been used throughout the body of this report, the story of these young defectors merits special notice. The explanation of it follows in their own words.

- "(If we didn't capture the villagers), we were arrested and put in the camp jail... Me, I was beaten on my back with an iron bar for this. Warrant Officer Han Tun hit me 20 or 30 times with the iron bar and my back was cut open and bleeding - I still have the scar. Then they kept me tied up in the hot sun all day without food or water, with my legs in the stocks and nothing but short pants on. They kept other soldiers tied up in the hot sun like this too. Sometimes if the villagers saw us, they'd come and pretend to work in the field and sneak a bottle of water to the soldier because they felt sorry for him. After that torture, I was wounded for twenty days. All the commissioned officers beat us often, including Capt. Hla Myint Soe, Capt. Aung Naing, and the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Tin Maung Aye."
  (KHRG: 'Zaw Myint': August 1994)

- "The leaders beat me and punished me because I couldn't keep up with the training. They also beat me when I got sick because I could not keep up with the others. They beat me especially during the parade drill, because my health was not good. I had diarrhea. After the training I was sent to 434 Battalion, to Hill 1653. At first it was okay, but then the non-commissioned officers started drinking all the time and they yelled at us and beat us, so I was unhappy and didn't want to stay there. Sometimes I was so sick, I couldn't go down the hill to carry water. I had malaria. The officers said, 'You're just lazy. You're a liar.' They beat me with a cane. I had fever and vomiting but they didn't care about me. Even if they had medicine, they wouldn't give me any because they said I was faking. The food was also very bad. The SLORC makes trouble for their own soldiers, beating them and treating them very badly. I feel very bad about that."
  (KHRG: 'Thein Mya': August 1994)

- "We were also beaten. When soldiers were sick with malaria, the officers didn't care, they just ordered them to the front-line anyway. The soldiers were too sick to walk so the officers yelled at them and beat them. Some of these soldiers got so depressed they committed suicide. My friend was staying together with me in the clinic one time. He was almost always sick, so the officer came in and said to him, 'You must put on a woman's sarong and walk around the camp!" and then he punched him in the face. When I was doing refresher training at the front-line there were also some things I couldn't do because I was sick with fever, so the officer kicked and beat me. They also beat me whenever I gave a wrong answer. They beat me in front of all the other soldiers. The officer ordered me, 'You must do this,' and I answered him, 'I'm very sick,' so he got angry and said, 'I'm an officer. You're a private. Why do you answer me like that? You're insubordinate!' and he punched me in the jaw."
  (KHRG: 'Ye Kyaw': August 1994)

- "At Hill 1653 when I had sentry duty and I got sleepy, they beat me. We also had to go do labor cutting bamboo every day, and the officers ordered us, 'Make bricks. You'll get money.' But then they sold the bricks and never gave us any of the money. We never got any of the good rations like milk and sugar either. We had to work constantly for the officers. and they also took porters to work for them. We had to provide security for supply convoys and the officers forced some very old men to carry ammunition, but they couldn't carry it so the officers kicked them... When we went to carry rations, I was too slow climbing the mountains so the officers kicked me. I was very unhappy, so I decided to run away from the camp."
  (KHRG: 'Maung Tin Shein': August 1994)

- "The officers and non-commissioned officers oppressed us and made trouble for us, not only for the soldiers but also for the porters and civilians, and we never got our full salary because they cut it every time. We were all unhappy, so we decided to escape."
  (KHRG: 'Maung Win Naing': August 1994)

- "In the army I got no time to sleep, no time to eat, no good food, and I was tortured by the non-commissioned officers, so I discussed it with my friends and we decided to escape. We decided to shoot the non-commissioned officers and the warrant officer before we ran. It's terrible the way the non-commissioned officers torture the soldiers. They don't care at all about the soldiers, they only think of their own interests. I couldn't bear to stay with them because they're very bad men."
  (KHRG: 'Maung Shwe Hla': August 1994)

- "After 3 months at the Hill I was very depressed and I didn't want to stay there anymore. Later 3 of us discussed it and we decided to run away. It was me, Ye Kyaw and one of the medics. Then Zaw Myint said, 'You are all very young, so I'll help you plan the escape, and I'll escape with you.' After that we shot our officers, took our arms, and escaped."
  (KHRG: 'Thein Mya': August 1994)

- "The night we ran away the officers were drinking and playing cards. Every night they were drinking and playing cards. If one of them was losing he yelled at the soldiers, beat us and abused us. That night all the non-commissioned officers were drunk and they beat every soldier. Corporal Than Tun was losing at cards and he beat every one

of us. After that, we discussed escaping. Zaw Myint said, 'If you want to escape we must kill the NCOs first.' That night at 11 or 12 o'clock Zaw Myint, Ye Kyaw and one of the medics shot him. I was on sentry duty at the time."
(KHRG: 'Maung Hla Tint': August 1994)

- "We all discussed running away. I shot Corporal Thein Win myself. After killing him I was very happy! At night the warrant officer, Han Tun, slept beside on the medics. Corporal Than Tun slept beside Zaw Myint, and Corporal Thein Win slept beside me. At 11 o'clock that night we went to our beds but we didn't sleep. We just sat down and shot them.
(KHRG: 'Ye Kyaw': August 1994)

- "When we left we took 65 grenades, bullets, our guns and the 81 mm mortar. There were eleven of us, and we all had torches, but we didn't know our way in the jungle, and we were all inexperienced. We arrived at ______ village at 5 in the morning, but we were afraid to enter the village, because we fear the KNU or ABSDF might be there and kill us. We stood hiding in the marsh and slept standing up. Our older brother told us, 'Don't be down-hearted. We'll meet the villagers and explain what happened, and it will be okay.' Some of the youngest ones just wanted to try to make their way home. Finally we went into the village and the villagers fled in fear. We met the village headman and explained how we had defected to him. At first he really didn't want to believe us. We put down our guns and 'shikohed' *[a sign of respect, similar to kowtowing]* to him. The next day he arranged for us to meet with the KNU. So in total we killed three of our officers. During that whole time, we had no contact with our families. When we arrived in the KNU area, it was 7 June 1994. We stayed with Bo _____ [a KNU officer] for a month after arriving at ______ [a Karen village], then we lived at Manerplaw with Bo _____ for about one month."
(IA: 'Zaw Gyi': December 1995).

These soldiers subsequently decided to join the opposition forces.

Some soldiers did not undergo as harsh treatment, but still complained of favoritism among their officers.

- "I was punished by my officers because I complained about their unfair treatment. They gave favor to some soldiers who always obeyed any orders of them, whether they were right or wrong. If they don't like someone, he will be beaten for some trumped up reason, and will have to do a lot of work. Also, he will have no chance to get a pass to leave the base."
(IA: 'Maung Aye Win': December 1995)

- "Children weren't treated fairly and equally in my battalion. They got more work, more punishment, and less care than the adults did. There was no chance for promotion if you were young; you just didn't have the same opportunities. Adults always took advantage of us, and we had no recourse through army regulations against them. Anyone who was older and stronger than you were had power over you. They got the best of everything and we got the worst. I was punished on occasion. The first time I was punched for being sleepy while I was on duty, and when I complained I got more work to do. Then I was punched and kicked by Major Phone Maung Shwe,

deputy commander of LIR 202, for using a few kyats to get a snack when I was doing the marketing. It was common every day to see child soldiers being harshly punished for things like this."
(NGO: 'Aung Soe': November 1995)

- "I was beaten once for sleeping while on duty. I was told I had to be disciplined so that I could learn when I have committed an offense. I have seen other child soldiers in my group punished the same way."
(NGO: "Thein Tint': November 1995)

Only one SLORC defector we interviewed claimed to have a close relationship with his senior officers.

- "...we were like brothers. We were the worst kind of soldiers. If we saw people, we hit and kicked them. Some people were innocent, but if we were drunk, we would verbally abuse the villagers and proceed to beat and kick them. Sometimes if the chairman of the village was unlucky, we beat and kicked him too."
(IA: 'Maung Hlaing': April 1995)

Despite the fact this young man initially claimed his relationships with his seniors were good, he eventually shot at his commanding officer, a sergeant, in an argument over money, and fled to an opposition area to escape court-marshal.

DRUGGING OF COMBAT TROOPS AND PORTERS

Young SLORC defectors, in partic the medic who witnessed the sale of UNICEF medicines, testified that young soldiers were given amphetamines, tranquilizers and alcohol before being sent into battle.

- "We also distributed tranquilizers to the soldiers in the various camps around our unit. Before battles, we would take tablets the size of goat pellets and mix each with a lemon. Then they would be given to the soldiers out behind the barracks where no one could see. In the Ho Palaung area, they ground 5 of these tablets and mixed them with army rum and gave them to 30 porters. The porters were sent to mined areas to sweep for mines. All of them died. Often the officers would mix 4 tablets with a bottle of rum for the soldiers or the porters, to increase their strength and courage, and dull their sensitivity and ability to feel pain."
  (IA: 'Sein Myint': December 1995)

Similar assumptions had been made by observers after the battle of *Htwee Pah Wee Kjo* [Sleeping Dog Mountain] and the human-wave attacks on the almost impenetrable stationary KNU base on the border, *Kawmoorah*. KNU commanders were shocked by both the youth of the dead soldiers and their bravery, if not stupidity. The same observations were made after other major KNU-SLORC battles.

- "I don't know what the SLORC soldiers were given, but some defectors told us they were given whiskey before they went into battle. I don't know if they put something in the whiskey. But at Phalu, there were a lot of boys rushing the field, screaming like banshees when they rushed the barbed wire (barricade in the field). It seemed at first like they were immortal or impervious or something, because we shot at them but they just kept coming. We had no choice: it was kill or be killed."
  (IA: 'Captain Htay Gaw': December 1995)

INCIDENCE OF INJURY AND DEATH AMONG SLORC CHILD SOLDIERS

Throughout the interviews we conducted with child defectors from the Tatmadaw (see above), frequent mention was made of child soldier casualties, especially in combat situations. Again, however, no statistics are available on the numbers of injuries and deaths. An officer from the KNU gave this observation.

- "The defectors we've talked to here have told us that when they joined the SLORC, they were told, 'Don't worry, they [the KNU soldiers] die very easily, the Karen don't have good guns. They will run away when you shoot at them one or two times.' We don't usually kill the soldiers who surrender to us. But sometimes there are seriously injured soldiers who have no chance of survival. In order that they don't suffer, we help them to 'be born again'. At one time most of the dead SLORC soldiers we saw on the battlefield were the same age as me, but now there are a lot of young boys."
  (IA: 'Captain Htay Gaw': December 1995)

CHILDREN SACRIFICED TO WAR: BURMA; Laws mask state abuse

The Guardian
November 11, 1996
Nick Cumming Bruce, Bangkok

Take Burma's Child Law at face value and the ruling military State Law and Order Restoration Council (Slorc) appears keen to promote child welfare and development. It gives children the right to participate in social and religious organisations, and freedom of speech. Take instead the experience of Naw Sah Mu, an ethnic Karen girl aged 15, who was taken by the military to work as a porter. She has had a leg blown off by a land mine and seen a friend blinded by shrapnel. Now the harsher reality of Slorc rule starts to emerge.

The number of minorities fleeing to camps along the border with Thailand is rising inexorably. The refugees tell of military brutality against every section of the population, including children. More than 101,000 people from three minorities - Karen, Karenni and Mon - crowd into 26 border camps; half of them are aged under 19. They survive on a meagre subsistence. The children in particular suffer from malaria, diarrhoea and respiratory problems, but at least they are safe.

After decades of conflict with minorities seeking autonomy, Slorc forces are relentlessly taking control of their states. However, the end of fighting has not brought with it peace. Young children are forced to work as porters, carrying heavy loads of ammunition and food - the loads increasing as they get older - or sweep roads for mines. Those who escape say beatings are common; those falling sick are left to die. At night, women of all ages routinely face multiple rape by soldiers. Conditions are worst in areas of fighting: troops systematically burn villages and crops to force out their populations. Many are driven into labour camps or reduced to begging, others escape into the hills, running a gauntlet of hunger and disease which is said to kill up to half of those aged under five.

Even in areas away from fighting, Slorc compels families to send their children, some as young as eight, to build roads and railways.

* Glenys Kinnock will present a videotape to MEPs in Strasbourg today in which Burma's leading democracy activist, Aung San Suu Kyi, accuses Rangoon of using children, prisoners and civilians for forced labour. Mrs Kinnock, Labour's MEP for South Wales East, flew to Burma at the weekend to muster support for an investigation by the European Union into labour conditions in Burma and an end to its preferential trade tariffs.

On Saturday, a government mob attacked cars carrying Ms Suu Kyi and two other leading activists.

Burma

6. Prison Conditions

Myanmar Exiles Tell of Torture at Hands of Military
AP
26-AUG-98

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) -- The soldiers came in the middle of the night, Ye Teiza said. At least a dozen of them, surrounding his home in Myanmar's capital and pounding on the door.

``My heart was racing," he said. ``I knew I was going to be arrested."

Ye Teiza was a member of a student union campaigning for democracy and an end to decades of military rule in Myanmar, also known as Burma.

In interviews with The Associated Press and in a soon-to-be-published book, Ye Teiza and eight other former political prisoners in Myanmar tell far different tales of their own treatment. They detailed their accounts of physical and psychological torture suffered at the hands of the nation's military government.

The book, called ``Tortured Voices: Personal Accounts of Burma's Interrogation Centers," will be published by the All Burma Students Democratic Front, an anti-government exile group. It covers their arrests in the early 1990s, and reports from human rights groups say conditions haven't improved since then.

The military government denies people are mistreated while under arrest.

``Myanmar is a land of strong Buddhist belief, and such inhumane acts are nonexistent," said a government spokesman. He called the book anti-government propaganda.

Nonetheless, the government gunned down 3,000 pro-democracy demonstrators who were calling for an end to military rule in a nationwide protest in 1988.

Ye Teiza and his colleagues say they were brutalized and subjected to torture until they named other democracy activists and signed false confessions. Then, they say, they were given sham trials and sentenced to long prison terms.

Prisoners said they were kept in dungeon-like cells. At the hands of successive squads of interrogators, they were beaten daily, threatened with death and rape, subjected to electric shocks, and deprived of sleep, food, water and using a toilet for days at a time.

During questioning, they were always blindfolded, the writers said. Some were kept in stocks, while others had iron rods rolled over their shins. They were forced to kneel on sharp stones until they bled or stand on their toes for hours with pins beneath their heels.

People arrested by the regime, the authors said, enter the centers with bags pulled over their heads. Sightless, they were terrified by a continuous wailing of people in excruciating pain.

Naing Kyaw, an arrested student, wrote that with every question he was hit, no matter how he answered. The interrogators never let prisoners slip into unconsciousness, something many of them longed for.

Ye Teiza said an officer told him: ``We can kill you without any problem." He eventually managed to flee Burma in 1997.

Ye Teiza recalls his experiences after being arrested. Asking for water was asking for abuse. Many had it poured over the hoods they were forced to wear, causing the fabric's fibers to close, nearly suffocating them. Fear of rape was frequent among female prisoners.

Eventually, prisoners were tried and charged with disturbing the peace and tranquility of the state. All said they were denied lawyers and sent to Insein Prison in Yangon.

Those who thought that meant the abuse was over were wrong. Prisoners are frequently returned to interrogation centers from the jail for more torture.

The regime's tactics have been effective. Most people are too fearful to risk rising up against it.

The government has failed to break the will of a small vanguard of democracy activists. On Monday, in the first public protest in almost two years, 200 students spilled into the streets of Yangon and demonstrated for an end to military rule.

They fled down side streets as soldiers arrived.

FROM: Philip McCracken and Nyi Nyi Lwin of the Rangoon Post

Myanmar Camps Kill Thousands, Released Thais Say

Reuters
21-SEP-98

YANGON, Sept 21 (Reuters)- Thousands of Myanmar prisoners die each year from starvation and sickness or are beaten to death in "slave labour camps," a group of released prisoners said on Monday.

Myanmar's military government freed 101 Thai prisoners on Monday in what it called a goodwill gesture to boost relations with its eastern neighbour.

Most of the Thais are fishermen, locked up for more than three years in Yangon's In Sien prison and in Mandalay after their vessels entered Myanmar's territorial waters.

The Thai prisoners, speaking on their return to Bangkok, said they were generally treated well but spoke of appalling conditions faced by their Myanmar cellmates, most of whom were convicted of petty crimes such as theft.

Local prisoners faced regular beatings, infection from HIV-contaminated medical supplies or were sent to labour camps from which many never returned, they said.

"Myanmar tries to lessen overcrowding in its jails by sending prisoners to slave camps from which only 50 percent return," one Thai trader, who spent time in both In Sien and Mandalay jails, told Reuters.

The released prisoners said Mandalay jail, which houses more than 9,000 inmates, sent prisoners to work in rice fields or on construction sites where they were forced to break rocks.

"My cellmate who returned from six months in a slave camp told me that only 70 of 300 prisoners returned to jail," said a prisoner who was sentenced to 18 years' jail for attempting to smuggle rubies out of Myanmar.

"More than 50 percent died from poor nutrition or sickness while some escaped," he added.

He said officials and fellow inmates had told him during his 10-month stay in Mandalay that at least 50 prisoners died in the jail each month from sickness or beatings.

One released trader said more than 530,000 prisoners were kept in Myanmar's relatively few jails. "From Yangon to Mandalay, Myanmar has only 10 jails," he said.

The Thais said the worst ordeals were experienced in In Sien jail in Yangon, both by local and foreign inmates.

"Five hundred prisoners were sent out to slave camps in May, but less than 100 of them returned. They looked like skeletons, not like human beings," said another ex-prisoner.

The Thais said many Myanmar prisoners were prepared to work in the rice fields or on construction sites because this allowed them to earn reductions in their jail terms.

"The worst thing is Myanmar jails are flooded with AIDS," said one Thai. "Because the prisons lack medicine and medical equipment, the prisoners share the same needles."

They said deaths from sickness and beatings were rising, especially among inmates with HIV or those who had developed AIDS.

"At least two persons die every day in In Sien prison," said one. In Sien houses more than 12,000 inmates, he said.

But the ex-prisoners said the Myanmar authorities generally treated foreign prisoners relatively well.

"For us, everyone has his own needles and we have our own medicine that is sent to us by relatives or by the public health ministry," a Thai trader said.

But even foreign prisoners face a high death rate, they said.

Rut Somnak, a trawler skipper arrested in 1995 along with 60 other Thai fishermen, said at least eight of his fellow fishermen had died in In Sien jail during the past three years.

Burma

7. Women's Rights Violations

JUL 92

Women of Burma

an open working group

WOMEN IN BURMA : LIVING UNDER THE GUN

"The education and empowerment of women throughout the world cannot fail to result in a more caring, tolerant, just and peaceful life for all." Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate leader of Burma's democracy movement

Women in Burma have traditionally played a role in society that was equal to men. So it is not very surprising that Burma's pro-democracy party, the National League for Democracy, which won over 80% of the votes in a 1990 election, is led by a woman, Aung San Suu Kyi. But that political party was never allowed to take power, and has been relentlessly persecuted by the ruling military junta, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). The SLORC power structure is exclusively male, so much so that it was the only government to send an all-male delegation to the 1995 UN Conference on Women, in Beijing.

Women have been actively resisting the brutal dominance of the SLORC, often at great personal danger. Aung San Suu Kyi herself endured over six years of house arrest, and her life has been threatened by SLORC officials, troops and hired mobs. One of her party members, Dr. Ma Thida, a young physician and writer, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for her political views, and is suffering from severe health difficulties. Numerous other female pro-democracy activists have been detained, tortured and killed because of their peaceful resistance to the SLORC.

In ethnic minority areas, where SLORC troops wage war on indigenous groups, women are often targeted for abuse. Female heads of villages are tortured, murdered, or held hostage by SLORC soldiers. Ethnic minority women who are suspected of membership in underground women's organizations are raped and tortured in a SLORC effort to suppress such groups. Systematic rape is used in Burma as a way for SLORC troops to terrorize civilians into complete obedience. Women, including those who are pregnant or nursing mothers, are routinely used for forced labor, carrying supplies for SLORC troops or building roads, railways, and SLORC army barracks. They are beaten, gang-raped by the troops and often die as the result of mistreatment, disease and starvation at the work sites.

Acts of Resistance Whenever possible, Burma's women try to resist such abuses, and provide much-needed education and health care in the war-torn frontier regions. Dr. Cynthia Maung, of the Karen ethnic group, has set up mobile health teams and clinics in remote areas. Women's groups teach nutrition and provide child-care in extremely difficult circumstances. For many, though, the only way to survive is to become refugees in neighboring countries such as Thailand, China and Bangladesh. Uprooted from their home villages, with children to look after, the refugee women seek shelter in an uncaring world. They are frequently pushed back to persecution in Burma. Many young girls and women from Burma are exploited as sex-workers in Thailand and China-held captive, unpaid and exposed to one of the world's highest rates of HIV/AIDS infection.

The Role of Foreign Investment Foreign investment in Burma has not helped the plight of women under the SLORC. While women are ordinarily entrepreneurs in Burma's agricultural and crafts markets, most investment involves large multinational companies going into joint ventures with the military regime to extract natural resources or exploit cheap labor. Opportunities for employment for women have been few, and in the case of garment factories have been in directly military-connected businesses-which perpetuate the cycle of repression. Investments like teak-logging, trawler fishing, and gas production have been secured with huge military campaigns causing tens of thousands of women to flee Burma as refugees. Aung San Suu Kyi has repeatedly urged foreign companies to wait until democracy has been achieved in Burma before rushing to invest. At present, their hard currency is only enabling the SLORC to buy more weapons.

8. Education in Burma

From BurmaNet News

Background: Open-the-Schools Campaign

This campaign aims at highlighting the situation of students in Burma who have been systematically denied access to education by the military regime that rules the country. The State Law and Order Restoration Council (recently renamed the State Peace and Development Council) has, on every occasion that it has faced legitimate demands for quality education and students' rights, responded by closing down all educational institutions - secondary schools, high schools, universities and technical schools. To consolidate control, the regime has targeted students, teachers and parents with severe penalties for any actions seen to be detrimental to its interests. The consequence of this policy is the systematic violation of students' rights which began in 1962 and has now reached crisis proportions - with the regime regarding and treating students as enemies. Students are expelled from schools, arrested, tortured, jailed for long terms, and even killed for expressing any form of dissent.

Rather than developing a quality education system as a means of building Burma's human resource base, the generals have sought to subvert education in Burma for their own purposes - to remain in power at any cost.

Schools and universities have been shut for seven out of ten years between 1988-98. Currently, university campuses in Burma have been closed down for more than a year since December 1996 following peaceful demonstrations by students for their rights.

The future of Burma is at stake - thousands of Burmese youth, have, for decades been denied all hope for bettering their lives. Education is the most basic right that citizens of any country should be accorded. In Burma, only the rich and powerful have access to quality education, mostly in foreign universities. The military junta is systematically destroying the desire for intellectual stimulation and knowledge among students, and denying the majority of students their right to be self-supporting, productive members of society.

Background information

The Burmese education system has been controlled by successive dictatorial regimes since the military coup in 1962. Student demonstrations protesting the military coup in 1962 were violently crushed and the historic students' union building in Rangoon University blown up. All schools were nationalized and even the curriculum shaped to bolster the regime's political agenda. In recent times, campuses were shut down after the 1988 nation-wide democracy uprising. After reopening briefly in May 1991, campuses were closed again after demonstrations at Rangoon University and during student celebrations at the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Student unions have been banned as have any kind of collective student activity. Under successive military governments not only have education conferences been strictly controlled, but social functions, art and cultural organizations, ethnic group associations, religious organizations and student associations of any kind have been banned as well. The government directly controls international conferences on any subject. Papers, articles or discussions providing constructive criticism on the existing education system

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are not only banned but the authors and critics are subject to severe actions.

Following 1988, in addition to all campuses being shut down, Burmese students have come under strict control by the military. Lt. Gen.Khin Nyunt, Secretary (1) of SPDC, head of the intelligence department, chairs the National Education Committee of Myanmar. The military regime spends manpower and resources to control the student populace. They are pursuing a policy of separating and isolating students so that they will not be able to contact each other. Iron fences have been built around Rangoon University campus, big gates constructed at other campuses to control access, the Rangoon University campus has been separated into arts and science branches and the Institute of Economics divided into different campuses. These actions seek to deny students the chance to communicate and to unite; instead putting them under absolute control.

Also, regional offices of the military intelligence have been opened in university campuses. Through threats, bribes, infiltration and by organizing government front groups on campus, a climate of distrust and fear has been created to divide and control the students. Children of military authorities, and informers are offered prominent positions in student bodies, poor students are made informants by paying them a stipend.

The regime-controlled education system has resulted in sub-standard education, critical lack of teaching facilities, unskilled teachers, lack of job opportunities after graduation, corruption and bribery. The vastly deteriorating economic situation also forces students to leave schools even when they are functioning. Student demonstrations in December 1996, therefore, demanded changes in the education system rather than the current one supporting the political agenda of the SPDC. The regime has consistently responded by arresting, torturing and jailing hundreds of students and shutting schools to prevent the demonstrations and student organizing rather than addressing the problems.

The prolonged closure of schools has affected the future of almost all young Burmese. Only those with political influence, such as the children of the generals, and those rich enough enjoy uninterrupted and quality education. Since no independent educational institutions are permitted, students are unable to study out of the formal education system. With the universities closed for seven years in the past decade, most students have not even been able to complete their undergraduate degree. The regime, in addition, has lowered the academic standards by reducing school terms; four year degree courses have been lessened to a year or a year and a half. These conditions, along with the worsening economic crisis within the country and the political repression, means for the majority of Burmese youth abandoning their education (even when it is available) and leaving for other countries is the only option.

Thursday, August 6, 1998 Published at 13:59 GMT 14:59 UK

Burma's lost generation

Former Burmese students continue their protests, in Bangkok

By regional analyst Joe Havely:

For much of the past decade, Burma's universities and high schools have been silent. An entire generation has missed out on education, and those who do have training are leaving the country.

These are Burma's lost generation.

Aung San Suu Kyi, May 1998: "nobody can deny that we are in an economic mess"

Burma was once one of the most economically promising countries in Asia. But years of economic mismanagement have made it one of the poorest in the world.

The student 'threat'

Burma's military leaders have long been suspicious of campus politics. After seizing power in 1962, the army blew up the student's union building at Rangoon University.

"The government has never understood the students" says Kyi Kyi May, head of the BBC Burmese Service. "Even the smallest protests were seen as a threat."

After the military crackdown in 1988, many students who took part in the protests were forced to flee the country. As universities were closed, those who had their education cut short were forced to work as trishaw drivers, road sweepers or even prostitutes.

1988: students take to the streets to demand change

Some were educated at home or in the private schools that sprang up for those that could afford them. But subjects like medicine, law and accountancy are difficult to teach outside established universities.

Strict control

Today the man in charge of Burma's education system is Lt-General Khin Nyunt - the head of military intelligence and the strongman of the Burmese government.

The government fears that student gatherings may rekindle the flames of political opposition and he has strict control of what is taught.

"There's no freedom to chose courses," says Aye Min, a former Burmese university lecturer. "Everything must be submitted to the government-controlled senate for approval."

Burmese student exiles in Thailand talk about Aung San Suu Kyi

It is a different story for the rulers' children. They have access to education abroad and are guaranteed jobs in the many business interests run by the generals.

Standards plummet

Although the government says it values education, under military rule, 40% of Burma's national budget is devoted to military spending - a mere 5% goes on education.

Wages have been so low that those with the skills to teach are unwilling to work.

OCT 98

Burmese student exiles in Thailand talk about Aung San Suu Kyi

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Wages have been so low that those with the skills to teach are unwilling to work.

The military crackdown forced many into exile

The poorly-trained teachers that do work are made to teach according to strict guidelines and are responsible for preventing their students from engaging in unauthorised political activities.

Aye Min says teaching quality has suffered: "When the universities are open there is a feeling that they have to make up for lost time. So they've cut the length of time it takes to get a BA or BSc from four years to just four months."

The cumulative effect is that standards plummet: new teachers are not trained, skills and knowledge do not get passed down, and an educational rot sets in.

Brain drain

Added to this is the steady departure of Burma's trained professionals - doctors, surgeons, engineers and lawyers - frustrated at the lack of opportunity.

Aung san Suu Kyi is remembered by Burmese across the world

Many young professionals protested alongside the students in 1988. At the time, it was difficult for people to emigrate.

But since then, says Kyi Kyi May, the government has freed up the system: "The government decided that if they're not happy, they should let them go. That leaves fewer people to speak out against them."

While the generals live in luxury, for those that remain life is hard. Kyi Kyi May has spoken to many people in Rangoon who say they often have to live without electricity or running water.

"Deprived of these necessities people are more worried about this than democracy" she says.

John Jackson, Burma Action Group: "if there isn't change soon we might see the sort of events that happened 10 years ago"

Without an educated society many observers fear that an efficient civilian government and civil service cannot emerge.

John Jackson of the human rights organisation Burma Action Group says the junta's policy is to "deliberately encourage a brain drain." He says that by preventing the emergence of an alternative, the generals believe they can hold on to power.

Burma has the potential to be a rich country. It has oil, gas and other mineral reserves, and the country used to be one of the world's major rice exporters.

But in the grip of Burma's generals, exploitation of the country's resources is channelled to the ruling elite, and they are keen to keep it this way.

After all says Kyi Kyi May, "the military didn't take power just to give it back again."

BBC News
August 6, 1998

9. Environmental Destruction

From Soros Foundation Burma Project

ENVIRONMENT

Burma is one of Asia's naturally richest but least developed lands. Its diverse ecosystem ranges from tropical reefs along the Bay of Bengal to the high Himalayas. Verdant agricultural lowlands once made the country a leading rice exporter. Burma's fishing grounds were among the world's most bountiful. Its immense native rain forests, some of the last remaining in all of Asia, are home to numerous endangered flora and fauna.

These forests are now being methodically and relentlessly destroyed. Burma's fisheries are being stripped. New agricultural policies imposed by the ruling State Peace and Development Council (until November 1997 known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council or SLORC) force farmers to double and treble crop rice, ignoring the traditional wisdom of crop rotation and opening the way to potentially disastrous soil depletion and pestilence. Mining and oil and gas operations are being rapidly expanded with dangerous disregard to environmental impact.

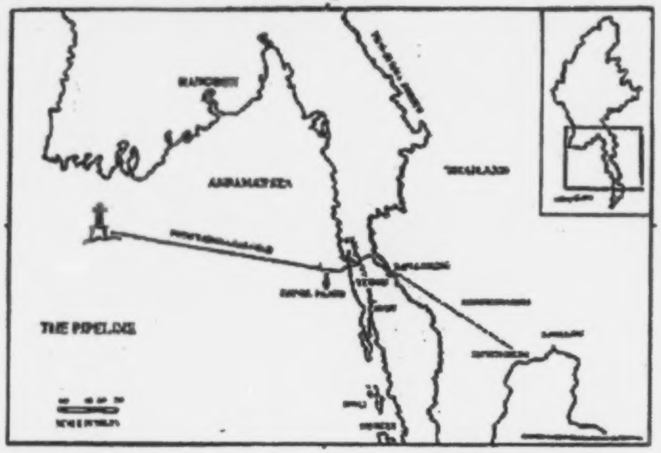
This destruction of Burma's environment has been documented in several international reports. But Burma's peoples today have absolutely no say in how their country's resources will be developed. The military closely guards all information, allows no public discussion or dissent, and punishes anyone who dares question its development priorities or other policies.

Ruled by a xenophobic military-dominated government from 1962-88 that pursued a "Burmese Way to Socialism," Burma missed the wave of development that brought new prosperity to its Southeast Asian neighbors — but which also scarred their environments through unregulated development. Since the army seized direct power in 1988, it has appeared intent on playing catch-up on both counts.

Broad swaths of rainforest, especially highly-prized teak forests, were opened to Thai loggers to earn foreign exchange and quickly denuded. Forests that for centuries provided the livelihoods and the cultural milieu for many ethnic minority peoples are being destroyed at an alarming rate exceeding that of Amazonian rainforests. The massive deforestation is causing new problems of erosion, floods, and landslides. It is also threatening some of the last habitats on earth for endangered animals such as the clouded leopard, gaur, silvered leaf monkey, tapir, tiger, Asian elephant, and Asian rhinoceros, which even vigorous reforestation projects can never re-establish.

Fishery concessions granted to Thai companies by the junta in 1989 and 1993 have led to severe overfishing by modern trawler fleets in wide areas of the Andaman Sea on Burma's southeastern coast. The depletion of a renewable resource for quick commercial gain is typical of the junta's economic policies — long-term environmental effects or their immediate impact on local residents are ignored. Many fishing villages in the area are increasingly impoverished as their traditional source of sustenance disappears.

The arrival of foreign mining companies seeking to exploit gold and other mineral reserves with virtually no environmental regulation now threatens mountain habitats in northern Burma as well as fragile coastal zones where tin is being dredged. Proposed massive hydroelectric projects on Burma's great rivers, especially the Salween along the Thai-Burma Frontier, would submerge rain forests that have for centuries been home to indigenous peoples and habitat for numerous endangered flora and fauna. The junta's headlong rush to acquire hard currency may allow foreign investors to construct dams and power plants without regard to their environmental impact.



Exploitation of the Yadana natural gas fields in the Andaman Sea and the construction of a pipeline across southeastern Burma to Thailand is another major threat to Burma's environment. Led by America's UNOCAL and France's TOTAL oil companies, in partnership with the Burmese regime, the $1.2 billion pipeline project has been pushed through without consultation or approval of local residents or an independent environmental impact assessment. The pipeline area is now thoroughly militarized. Local residents have suffered serious human rights abuses, and thousands have been conscripted as forced laborers on infrastructure projects. The pipeline's route will destroy forest habitats home to a number of rare animals.

UNOCAL and TOTAL, the biggest corporate investors in Burma, are today the target of consumer boycotts and shareholder actions in the United States and Europe. UNOCAL faces two law suits in U.S. Federal Court in the Central District of California that charge the company with abetting human rights violations associated with the pipeline project. The linkage between denial of human rights and environmental destruction is seen as clearly in Burma as anywhere in the world today.

From **Human Rights and the Environment** By **EarthRights International**
January, 1997

THE SITUATION IN BURMA

Burma is, beyond question, one of the world's worst violators of human rights. The country has been ruled by a brutal military dictatorship since 1962. In 1988, the military killed thousands of nonviolent pro-democracy protesters and imprisoned and tortured many others. The regime then reorganized into the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) and imposed martial law. In 1990, SLORC held free elections in which the opposition won 82% of the parliamentary seats. SLORC ignored the results. The regime allows no popular political participation and ruthlessly suppresses all forms of free speech and expression. Its actions and projects are shrouded in secrecy. Thus, the Burmese people receive little information concerning development and have absolutely no input into decisions affecting their lives, including those regarding environmentally destructive projects. SLORC also is engaging in the brutal suppression of indigenous peoples. Moreover, the regime has forced at least two million people to work on infrastructure projects since 1992,[5] and hundreds of thousands of others, primarily members of indigenous minority groups, to porter military equipment for the army in civil war zones.[6] The Human Rights Commission has found human rights abuses to be so pervasive and severe as to warrant the appointment of a special rapporteur on Myanmar, whose reports have documented these abuses.

Many of Burma's abuses are related to or result from SLORC's degradation of the environment. Most of SLORC's foreign exchange comes from the sale of natural resources,[7] and much of the money goes to the regime's military,[8] which is used almost exclusively against Burma's own peoples and which is the primary violator of the Burmese peoples' human rights. Moreover, the extraction of these natural resources frequently involves and causes massive human rights abuses. Thus in Burma, there exists a vicious cycle: SLORC perpetrates human rights abuses to exploit and degrade the Burmese peoples' environment without their consent in order to acquire the foreign exchange to fund further repression.

Indeed, SLORC's very existence is due in large part to the regime's exploitation of the environment. In late 1988, the SLORC regime was virtually bankrupt. In order to acquire the foreign currency needed to maintain its illegitimate hold on power, SLORC sold huge logging, fishing and gem concessions to Thailand.[9] Since then, Thai boats have depleted large fisheries in the Andaman Sea, and SLORC's efforts to forcibly expand the gem trade have taken a heavy toll in terms of lives and environmental degradation.[10] The logging concessions, however, were perhaps the most destructive. Concessions were sold along the Thai border on the traditional lands on which the indigenous Mon, Karen and Karenni peoples depend for subsistence. SLORC specifically directed military activity against civilians in areas containing teak and other valuable hardwoods in order to exploit these peoples' forest resources. Villagers were expelled from their homes to make way for the loggers, and many were either killed or forced to work as porters.[11] One commentator noted in 1994 that "the methods of felling and treatment of local villagers over the last five years break every international protocol on environmental practice, freedom of expression and political participation and indigenous land rights."[12] In addition to hard foreign currency, SLORC also received another "benefit" in exchange for the resource concessions: Thai cooperation in countering indigenous peoples' active resistance. This included the use of Thai territory to stage attacks on areas controlled by indigenous peoples.[13] Moreover, the timber sales themselves had a military dimension. The Thai logging companies had to cut roads through what had previously been impenetrable forest that shielded both indigenous people and dissidents who had fled the main cities after the massacres of 1988. SLORC used these roads to capture resistance strongholds, and the fighting and related SLORC abuses in the region forced thousands of people to flee to Thailand.[14]

Perhaps the largest threat to human rights and the environment in Burma today is the construction of a natural gas pipeline to Thailand by a consortium including the state petroleum companies of Burma and Thailand and two transnational oil companies, Unocal and Total. The Burmese portion of the pipeline will extend 220 miles across the Andaman Sea and then continue another 39 miles across the Tenasserim region to the Thai border on lands largely inhabited by indigenous peoples. In conjunction with the pipeline, SLORC is also building infrastructure and security related projects.[15] Once operational, the pipeline will provide SLORC with up to US$400 million per year for 30 years, its largest source of liquid funds.[16] The pipeline is vociferously opposed by the legitimately elected representatives of the people of Burma and by the indigenous peoples on whose lands the pipeline and related projects will be built.

In building the pipeline, SLORC is committing a variety of severe and pervasive human rights abuses, primarily against indigenous people. SLORC has drastically increased its military presence and has conducted offensives against indigenous resistance groups in order to secure the pipeline region. The army has arbitrarily detained, tortured, raped, intimidated, summarily executed and stolen from villagers.[17] The army has also forcibly relocated numerous villages near the pipeline and has confiscated farms along the railroad route without compensation.[18] Moreover, the government has been forcing tens of thousands of villagers to work as military porters and as forced laborers on the pipeline route and other roads, buildings and military camps related to the pipeline.[19] Children, pregnant women, the aged, the infirm and peasants who need to work on their farms all are forced to work on these projects. Workers are routinely beaten and even killed, and many others die as a result of exhaustion, disease or accidents.[20] Not surprisingly, thousands of villagers have fled their homes to avoid pipeline-related abuses and many of these have crossed over into Thailand.[21]

The building of the pipeline and its attendant infrastructure presents significant threats to the local environment. The exact extent of these effects, however, is impossible to know because of SLORC's secrecy concerning the projects. No independent environmental impact assessments ("EIAs") have been done, and the oil companies refuse to release their own EIAs. Off-shore drilling for natural gas, however, typically results in the pollution of the surrounding waters and the release of harmful emissions into the atmosphere. In addition, in Thailand, the pipeline route crosses rare, pristine forests which harbor a variety of endangered species. There is reason to believe similar types of lands will be affected in Burma.[22] Moreover, the only law in Burma is the martial law imposed by SLORC. Therefore, there are no environmental laws or judicial or administrative bodies to constrain the actions of the consortium members and there is no input into decisions about the pipeline from those people who are most directly affected. Thus, there is no reason to expect that the pipeline will be constructed or operated in an environmentally sensitive manner. This is particularly true in light of SLORC and Unocal's past history of environmental degradation.[23]

SLORC is also planning future projects which will likely entail environmental human rights abuses on an enormous scale. In particular, SLORC plans to develop huge hydro-electric projects in the east and southeastern parts of the country, despite the vehement opposition of the local indigenous peoples who will be affected. These projects would displace thousands of villagers and threaten the fisheries, watersheds and ecosystems many others depend on. They are also likely to be built with forced labor. Burma has two rationales for the projects: to provide power to some of the 500,000 people SLORC has forcibly relocated from their homes to new towns since 1988 and to sell power and water to neighboring countries for foreign exchange. Thus, Burma plans to perpetrate massive environmental human rights abuses as the direct result of past human rights abuses and to strengthen the regime's brutal hold on power.[24]

All of the projects noted above clearly illustrate the interrelationship between human rights abuses and environmental destruction described in the Ksentini Report. SLORC's perpetration of massive human rights violations to engage in these environmentally damaging activities is driven by the fact that it needs foreign currency to sustain its illegitimate regime. Moreover, SLORC victimizes the local indigenous peoples both through the torture, forced labor, intimidation and political exclusion utilized in degrading the environment, and through the effects such degradation has upon these peoples' ability to exercise their rights to life.

culture and a satisfactory standard of living. These violations are exacerbated by the fact that SLORC's forced relocations and the flight of many villagers from SLORC abuses compel the victims to clear additional land in order to survive, further damaging the environment on which they depend.[25] Such environmental degradation born of the misery and desperation caused by human rights abuses provides perhaps the starkest and most tragic example of the fundamental link between human rights and environmental protection.

10. Drugs in Burma

Drugs Keep Burmese Junta Afloat As Traffickers Prosper

South China Morning Post October 22, 1997

William Barnes

The Burmese junta repeatedly claims it is taking steps to stem the massive outflow of heroin and opium from its borders.

Yet in recent years the country has been enjoying much greater profits from drug sales than ever before, according to a recent report by the United States Embassy in Rangoon.

The document states that behind the rhetoric of the State Law and Order Restoration Council there appears to be a willingness to do deals with known or suspected narcotics traffickers. These include former drug warlord Khun Sa who surrendered over New Year in 1996 and is now said to be engaged in transport and gems in the capital.

"Reports suggest, however, that he had his Mong Tai Army colleagues continue to be involved in the narcotics trade," said this year's Foreign Economic Trends Report.

The military regime cut cease-fire deals with notorious ethnic drug dealers such as the Wa hill tribe and the Kokang Chinese community in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Recently the junta effectively encouraged traffickers to keep their ill-gotten gains in Burma when they stopped confiscating bank deposits that could not be shown to have been legally earned.

"During the mid-1990s there was abundant anecdotal evidence . . . that a growing proportion of Burma's narcotics export receipts were staying home rather than being kept abroad," the document said.

"Diverse businesses affiliated with these organisations began to flourish openly in Rangoon, presumably financed by proceeds from illicit trafficking in narcotics, gems and timber."

Narcotics remain Burma's most valuable export with its estimated potential production value at the border rising from US$500 million (HK$3.8 billion) in 1994, to US$850 million in 1995 and US$1.2 billion a year in 1996.

These figures do not include the extremely lucrative rise of amphetamine exports in the 1990s. Thus drug prices have also risen dramatically for Western addicts buying, say, on a New York street.

By contrast remittances from Burmese abroad, an important source of foreign exchange, were US$352 million in 1996.

Profits from the drug trade have helped fuel a spending boom in Rangoon where luxury hotels and traffic jams have appeared even though the junta's attempt to kick-start the real economy seems to have largely failed.

The traffickers are now evidently prospering in a country regarded as an international pariah and where military meddling has cramped the growth of legitimate businesses.

"In Rangoon some Burmese business people . . . complained of the increasing difficulty of competing with firms affiliated and allegedly funded by narcotics-cultivating and exporting organisations," the report said.

"Some of Burma's private banks, legal since 1992, appear to be affiliated with these organisations."

China Trade Arms to Burma for Heroin

Tiffany Danitz
Insight March 24, 1997

When the universities opened in August and September 1988, students gathered peacefully in Rangoon to demonstrate for democracy. Using Chinese weapons reportedly paid for with heroin, the junta ruling Burma killed or wounded an estimated 3,000 of them.

Most of the arms acquired by the military regime, known as the State Law and Order, came from the Polytechnologies Corp. Intelligence estimates indicate that in 1990 alone, Burma bought $1.2 billion worth of tanks, heavy artillery, armored-personnel carriers and other weapons. The Beijing-based Poly Group, an arm of the People's Liberation Army, or PLA, is chaired by Wang Jun, a guest of President Clinton at one of his White House fund-raising coffee kltaches.

SLORC is relatively poor and pays Beijing for weapons with profits from heroin exported to the United States through Southern China, according to the Washington-based Institute for Asian Democracy, or IAD.

"When we discuss the global drug problem posed by Burma, we also have to discuss China. The Chinese leaders have befriended and are assisting the ruling SLORC in Burma, and it is clear that China is now a major transit route for more than half teh heroin originating in the Golden Triangle," former Sen. Paul Simon of Illinois writes in an IAD document.

According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, Burma produces 80 percent of the heroin in Southeast Asia and is responsible for 60 percent of the world's supply. In the United States, the country is responsible for roughly 75 percent of the smack in New York City streets.

between 1974 and 1988 the United States poured $80 million into anti-narcotics efforts in Burma. In 1988, the State Department added another$5 million, according to the General Accounting Office. Aid then was suspended following the attack on pro-democracy demonstrators. Since that time, says U.S. drug czar Barry McCaffrey, SLORC has failed to resist the opium trade. In fact, say law enforcement sources, heroin exported from Burma to the United States had documented under the SLORC regime.

In December 1989, a Brooklyn grand jury indicted Burmese drug lord Khun

Sa on 10 counts involving smuggling 1,000 tons of heroin from Southeast Asia into New York. In January, SLORC apprehended Khun Sa but refused to extradite him to the United States. Instead, according to the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, a resistance group, he has been given amnesty and often is in Rangoon using security provided by SLORC.

"The general assumption is that the SLORC is broke," says a senior Senate staffer who specializes in China. "If they don't have normal things to sell, and the Chinese are not a public charity, then what do they sell? They give them access to Burmese naval bases, including the Bay of Bengal--and most people believe that the well-known heroin route from Burma up through the Hunan province" is given the green light by the Chinese.

Following a major drug bust in early 1995, a U.S. official familiar with Asian drug trafficking said that heroin unconvered in Russia may be part of an arms-for-drugs exchange between military officials in Burma and Chinese military officers. The large quantity of heroin was exchanged for Chinese arms worth $8 million, according to news reports.

Dyuring the week of Jan. 27 to Feb. 4, 300 of Wang's Poly trucks rolled into Burma around mid-night and delivered PLA weapons from China, a confidential source says, adding that another shipment was delivered Feb.7.

DENNIS BERNSTEIN AND LESLIE KEAN

◆

The thugs and drugs of Burma

◆

Mill Valley

THE ATTACK, she said, "was a deliberate attempt to harm us badly or even kill us."

Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma's Nobel Laureate and democracy leader, was speaking over a scratchy phone line from Rangoon.

She was referring to the Nov. 9 attack on her car by a stone-throwing mob of 200. They smashed her windows with iron bars.

Carefully orchestrated by the military junta known as SLORC — the State Law and Restoration Council — the violent ambush took place in an area tightly controlled by government forces who stood by without intervening. Not surprisingly, Suu Kyi was confronted by SLORC's thugs on her way to meet with supporters of the National League for Democracy, Burma's elected democratic party.

On Feb. 4, Suu Kyi reported that a high-level SLORC minister had publicly encouraged members of the pro-junta Union Solidarity and Development Association, the same group involved in the attack on her car, to murder her.

He "roughly told them to kill, that I should be killed," she said.

As urgently acknowledged by Suu Kyi in a recent telephone conversation from Rangoon, the time has come for the imposition of U.S. sanctions. SLORC is escalating its repression against her party, committing gross human rights violations, and incorporating its booming heroin trade into the permanent economy of the country, she said.

Suu Kyi said that the United States should impose sanctions "if the restrictions on the work of my party and on me personally are not removed in the very, very near future — in a matter of days."

In September, President Clinton signed into law the Cohen-Feinstein Amendment of the Omnibus Appropriations Bill, which included provisions setting a new policy course for Burma. The bill authorizes the administration to impose sanctions "if the Burmese government has physically harmed, rearrested for political acts or exiled Aung San Suu Kyi or has committed large-scale repression of or violence against the democratic opposition."

Suu Kyi believes these conditions have already been met.

"It has been more than a month since my road has been blocked off," she said. "The situation now is as bad as it has ever been." More than 100 members of her party have been arrested in the last two months alone.

Through decisive action, the United States could also address the devastating impact of Burma's booming drug trade on Americans and other countries around the globe.

Burma is the largest heroin exporter in the world, responsible for 60 percent of heroin sold in the United States. Heroin exports have more than doubled since the SLORC takeover eight years ago, and the junta is working publicly with known, major drug traffickers. Narco-dollars fund 50 percent of the export economy, as reported by the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon.

A year ago this month, the SLORC struck a deal for the "surrender" of legendary drug kingpin Khun Sa and provided him with profitable business opportunities in Rangoon.

Suu Kyi indicated that she does not think that counter-narcotics assistance from the United States or other countries can be productive.

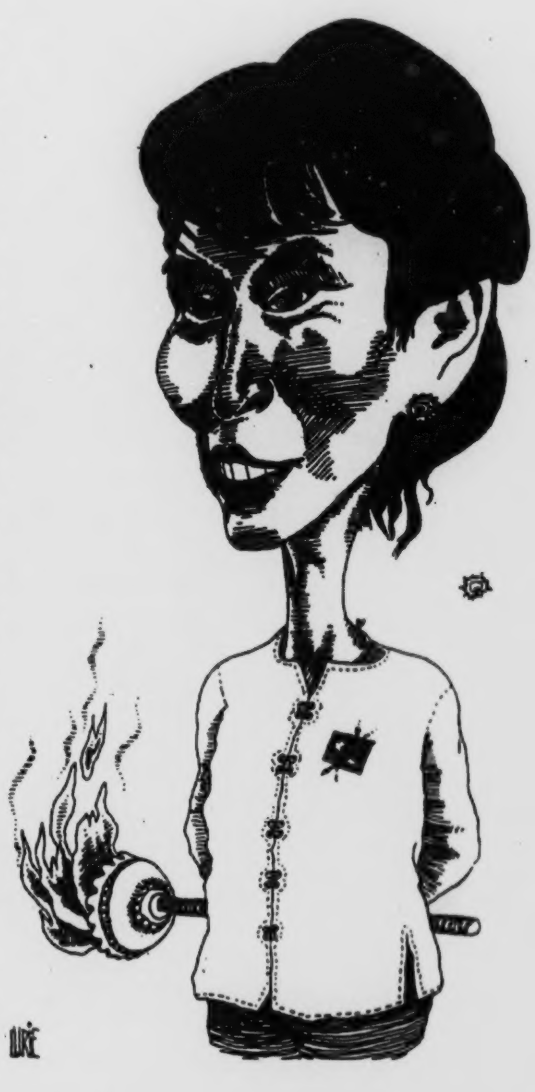
"It's very difficult to have any faith in the sincerity of SLORC's interest in stamping out drug production," she said, "if they find it so easy to forgive a drug baron. They are far more aggressive in their attitude towards the National League for Democracy than against drug traffickers."

Tragically, the upsurge in heroin use has been accompanied by a burgeoning AIDS epidemic — not surprising in a nation where over a hundred addicts typically share a single needle.

According to a former SLORC mining official, workers at government-controlled jade mines are paid with drugs instead of cash.

Suu Kyi is concerned about the increasing and widespread use of heroin on Burma's university campuses. "The implication of this is that the government is more interested in stamping out political activity than drug addiction," she said.

"Very few university students could get away with engaging in political activities on campus, but they seem to be able to get away with taking drugs, which are easy to obtain."



Time is running out. The longer the U.S. and other influential nations hesitate, the more entrenched the SLORC becomes. As the drug trade becomes increasingly embedded into the economy, the dictatorship is able to immunize itself from external pressure while keeping the nation addicted to drugs.

Although Aung San Suu Kyi has just made her strongest request yet for sanctions, it is up to President Clinton to follow through on the sanction law that he signed over three months ago.

Since the conditions for its implementation have been met, American credibility is being damaged while the SLORC acts with impunity in its challenge to U.S. resolve. Through sanctions, Clinton must send a clear message to Burma's ruling generals that repression of democracy and drug trafficking will not be tolerated by the world community.

Dennis Bernstein, an associate editor with Pacific News Service, is the co-host of "Flashpoints" on KPFA radio, Berkeley. Leslie Kean, co-author of "Burma's Revolution of the Spirit" (Aperture, 1994), directs the Burma Project USA in Mill Valley.

Friday, February 28, 1997 ★

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RANDOLPH A. HEARST
President

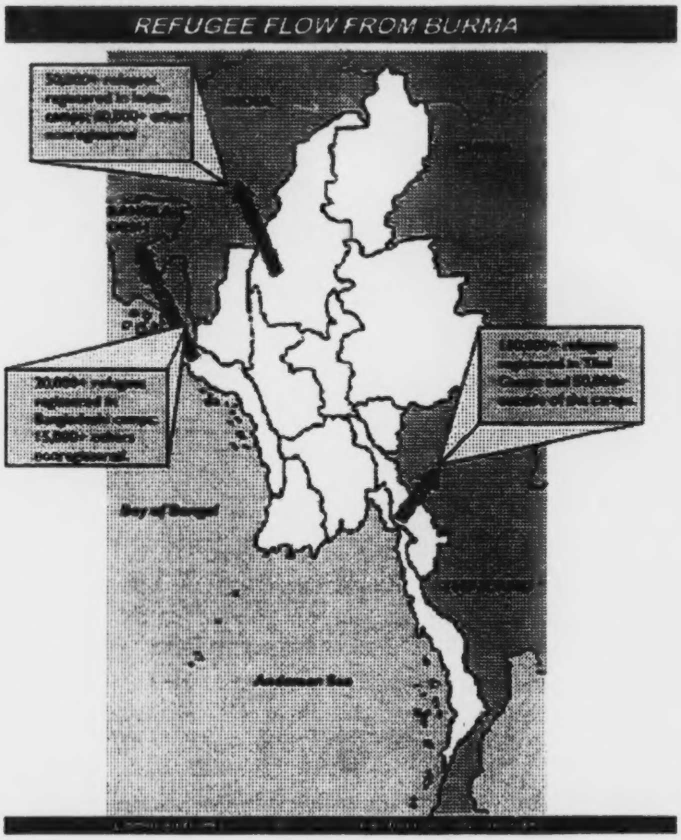
San Francisco Examiner

11. Refugees from Burma

REFUGEES

For decades, wave after wave of Burmese refugees have fled war and oppression in their native land to seek uncertain exile in neighboring countries. The toll in human suffering is incalculable, and the continual mass migrations have created serious regional disruptions and tensions. As of early 1998, nearly 300,000 Burmese were refugees in Thailand, Bangladesh, and India. Attacks by Burma's military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (until November 1997 the State Law and Order Restoration Council or SLORC), continue to drive people from their homes. Ever greater numbers of Burmese — as many as one million — are "internal refugees," chased from their homes by army attacks and forced relocations aimed at either cutting local links to armed opposition groups or seizing their lands for state-run farming or logging.

Burma's peoples are victim to some of the world's worst and most consistent human rights abuses. The United Nations, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other groups have produced numerous reports detailing a litany of gruesome violations. Political opponents of the army junta are murdered, tortured, or jailed for years under harsh conditions. Villagers are press-ganged as forced laborers or as porters in combat zones. In rural areas, summary executions, rape, and robbery by soldiers are routine and unpunished. Clearly, Burmese fleeing to exile fulfill the international legal definition of a refugee as someone who has "a well-founded fear of persecution" in their homeland.


REFUGEE FLOW FROM BURMA

After the bloody suppression of the 1988 pro-democracy movement, thousands of students and political activists evaded army round-ups and escaped to Thailand and India. Some returned to Burmese territory to take up arms against the regime. Others made their way to third countries and are still active in the democracy movement from exile. But many more have been forced to remain in camps near the Burmese frontier, often under very difficult conditions.

Ethnic minority peoples, comprising about 40% of Burma's population, are special targets for abuse. Their indigenous lands along Burma's frontiers have for decades been consumed by rebellions that have flared and simmered in a quest for autonomy or independence. The army, dominated by the majority Burman ethnic group, has exacerbated tensions and fanned resistance through heavy-handed and often savage responses to opposition activities. The army's "Four Cuts" strategy is designed to deny armed opposition groups access to food, money, information, and recruits. It is often enforced through mass relocations and widespread destruction of communities, accompanied by killings and other brutality.

Muslim people in southwestern Burma are special targets for repression. There, repeated military campaigns have included desecration and destruction of mosques and systematic rape. A major army campaign in 1991 drove a quarter million Rohingya people from their homes into neighboring Bangladesh. Most have returned with promises of safety, but over 20,000 today remain in camps in Bangladesh. They are joined every day by new refugees, even as the UN and Bangladesh government press the refugees to return home. Violent clashes broke out in two refugee camps in 1997 and 1998 as refugees protested against forced repatriation to Burma, where they warn they still face severe military persecution.

The Burmese junta uses religion as a weapon to divide people along the Thai frontier as well, where there is a sizable Christian minority. In 1995, the army encouraged a small group of Karen Buddhists to join them in taking up arms against Christians of the same ethnic group who are opposed to the Rangoon regime. The attacks have driven thousands of people across the border to Thailand. Burmese government-supported militia have continued to mount raids even across the international boundary, destroying refugee camps and killing or kidnapping civilians. These cross-border incursions have raised tensions with Thailand and the potential for regional unrest.

Forced relocations and displacement of people within Burma is another serious problem. Major army assaults in 1997 and early 1998 forced tens of thousands of Karen, Mon, and Shan people to abandon their villages and either flee to exile or move into army-controlled "strategic hamlets." The military junta, with no accountability to the population, has also imposed massive relocations of people in ethnic Burman majority urban and rural areas. Some people have been chased from their homes to allow for logging operations or the creation of state farms. Entire communities have been forced to move to new "satellite towns" that often lack services or communications and are sometimes located on disease-prone and infertile lands. Localized protests against such actions have been reported, but Burma's civilian population is basically defenseless against the regime's well-armed and fast-growing army.

Human Rights Watch Condemns Attack On Burmese Refugee Camp

On March 11, at 1:00 AM local time, Hway Kaloke refugee camps in Thailand's Mae Sot district were attacked by a group of some 100 Burmese government and Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) troops. Two people are confirmed to have died in the attack, and at least twenty others were seriously injured. One man, an amputee who was in the camp hospital, suffered severe burns. A total of 1,300 shelters in the camp, or approximately 85 per cent of the camp's area, were razed to the ground, leaving some 8,700 people homeless. The attack came as Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai was due to arrive in the U.S. for a three-day visit.

"It is imperative that camp security be immediately improved, as the remaining camps along the Thai/Burma border are all vulnerable to attack, said Mike Jendrzejczyk, Washington Director of the Asia Division of Human Rights Watch. "In the longer term, new sites must be found to house these refugees. It doesn't solve the problem to consolidate refugees in camps which remain vulnerable."

There was reportedly no warning of the attack, which came from the west, and Thai border patrol police, who have posts in the north and east of the camp, were ill-equipped to fend it off.

On March 10, refugees and local people reported heavy shelling in Burma, just over the border from the Mae La refugee camp. Local Thai authorities are reported to have said that this was a training exercise by Burmese government troops, but these same troops have made verbal threats that Mae La and another nearby camp, Nu Pho, will also be attacked in the next few days. Mae La currently houses over 30,000 people, after the residents of Shoklo camp were moved there earlier this month under the orders of the Thai authorities. Nu Pho houses some 10,000 refugees.

Today's assault and threats of further attacks are the latest in a series of abuses against Burmese refugees in Thailand carried out by the Burmese army and allied militia groups since December 1994. In January 1997 Hway Kaloke was attacked and razed, leaving one man dead and 7,000 homeless. In the same month, Mae La was attacked, and one woman killed, though the camp was saved by the intervention of Karen camp guards, supported by Thai soldiers, who fought off the intruders.

Immediately after last year's attacks, human rights organizations, nongovernmental organizations providing humanitarian aid in the camps, and Western governments all appealed to the Thai authorities to relocate the camps. At the time the Thai government responded that there were no available sites for the refugees. The attacks appear to be part of a long term strategy of the Burmese government to terrorize the refugees into returning to Burma and to force the armed Karen National Union to enter into a cease fire agreement with the government.

"We call on the Burmese government, which is responsible for these attacks on unarmed civilians, to immediately cease such attacks and take steps to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the resulting human rights violations," said Jendrzejczyk. " We also hope that senior U.S. policymakers meeting with Prime Minister Chuan will raise this issue, and urge an immediate improvement in camp security."

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14 APRIL 1998

Myanmar: Atrocities worsen in Shan State

Hundreds of people from the Shan ethnic minority have been tortured and killed by the Burmese army and at least 300,000 people forced to flee their homes during the last two years, according to an Amnesty International delegate who visited the region earlier this year.

"The vast majority of people we interviewed in Thailand lost relatives or friends who were killed by the Tatmadaw (Burmese army)," said Donna Guest, Amnesty International's Researcher on Myanmar.

If you are a UK based journalist and require further information please call the AIUK Press Office on 0171 814 6248 or e-mail
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"Their victims include women , children, the elderly and Buddhist monks. Witnesses described the most horrific methods of killing, including beating and kicking to death, stabbing, smashing heads in, being burnt alive, pouring boiling water over the victim's body and shooting."

In March 1996, in order to stop alleged support for the Shan States Army, an opposition group fighting the government, the Burmese authorities began massive relocations of Shan civilians. As a result, 1,400 villages were destroyed and at least 300,000 people lost their homes. Some people have been relocated three or four times and more than 80,000 people have fled across the border to Thailand.

The army usually only warns a village headman that his village is being relocated a few days in advance of the troops arriving. When soldiers do arrive, they often burn houses, steal livestock and food and threaten to shoot villagers on sight if they do not immediately leave their homes and most of their possessions behind.

The Tatmadaw killed at least 300 people in a series of massacres between mid-June and mid-July last year. Most were desperate relocated villagers who returned to their homes to look for food. Women captured and interrogated by the military have been raped - sometimes over a period of days - and some have died as a result.

Almost all the villagers interviewed, including women, were forced to work as porters for the army or on infrastructure projects - such as road, dam and railway construction. Men who were seized and forced to act as porters described being severely beaten and being deprived of food.

Because the Burmese government denies access to journalists and independent monitors, the full scale of the tragedy is difficult to gauge. What is clear is that the Shan are being targeted solely because of their ethnic origin or perceived political beliefs, in contravention of numerous international human rights standards.

Amnesty International is calling on the United Nations to press the State Peace and Development Council (Burmese military government) to grant unrestricted access to the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar and to pressure the SPDC to improve its human rights record. It is also calling on the SPDC itself to immediately halt all forced portering, forced relocation on ethnic grounds, and issue clear orders to the army to halt extrajudicial executions .

"While ASEAN governments have spent the last few years talking about 'constructive engagement' bringing about an improvement in human rights, the Burmese government has continued to subject the Shan people, and indeed millions of Burmese of all ethnic groups, to the most horrific human rights abuses imaginable," said Ms Guest.

"ASEAN governments last year admitted Myanmar into their regional grouping, and promised that the human rights situation would improve there. Now we are nearly a year on - just when will the changes begin?"

Background and cases

The population of the Shan State, the largest of the seven ethnic minority states in Myanmar, is approximately eight million people. Of these, some four million are Shan. The Shan people are ethnically related to the Thai, have a similar language, and also live in southern China and northern Thailand. Most of them are Theravada Buddhist rice farmers. In pre-colonial times, the area that is now the Shan State was ruled by Shan princes who sometimes owed allegiance to Burman or Thai overlords and were sometimes independent. Under British colonial rule, the Shan areas were administered separately from the rest of Burma.

After Burmese independence in 1948 disputes arose between some Shan political figures and the central administration in Rangoon over the handling of Shan affairs. In 1958 the first Shan armed opposition group was organised, and since then various other groups took up arms. Since 1989 some of these groups have agreed cease-fires with the SPDC but the SSA has continued in its armed struggle against the tatmadaw in central Shan State.

When soldiers arrived to relocate the villagers of Tard Mork, Sai Tun was taking his cattle to the relocation site when he was shot and then hung up by his feet near the entrance to the village as a warning. Nang Ing, a 30-year old woman returned to her village to get some rice. She was captured and gang raped by three soldiers who then poured boiling water over her. A few days later she died.

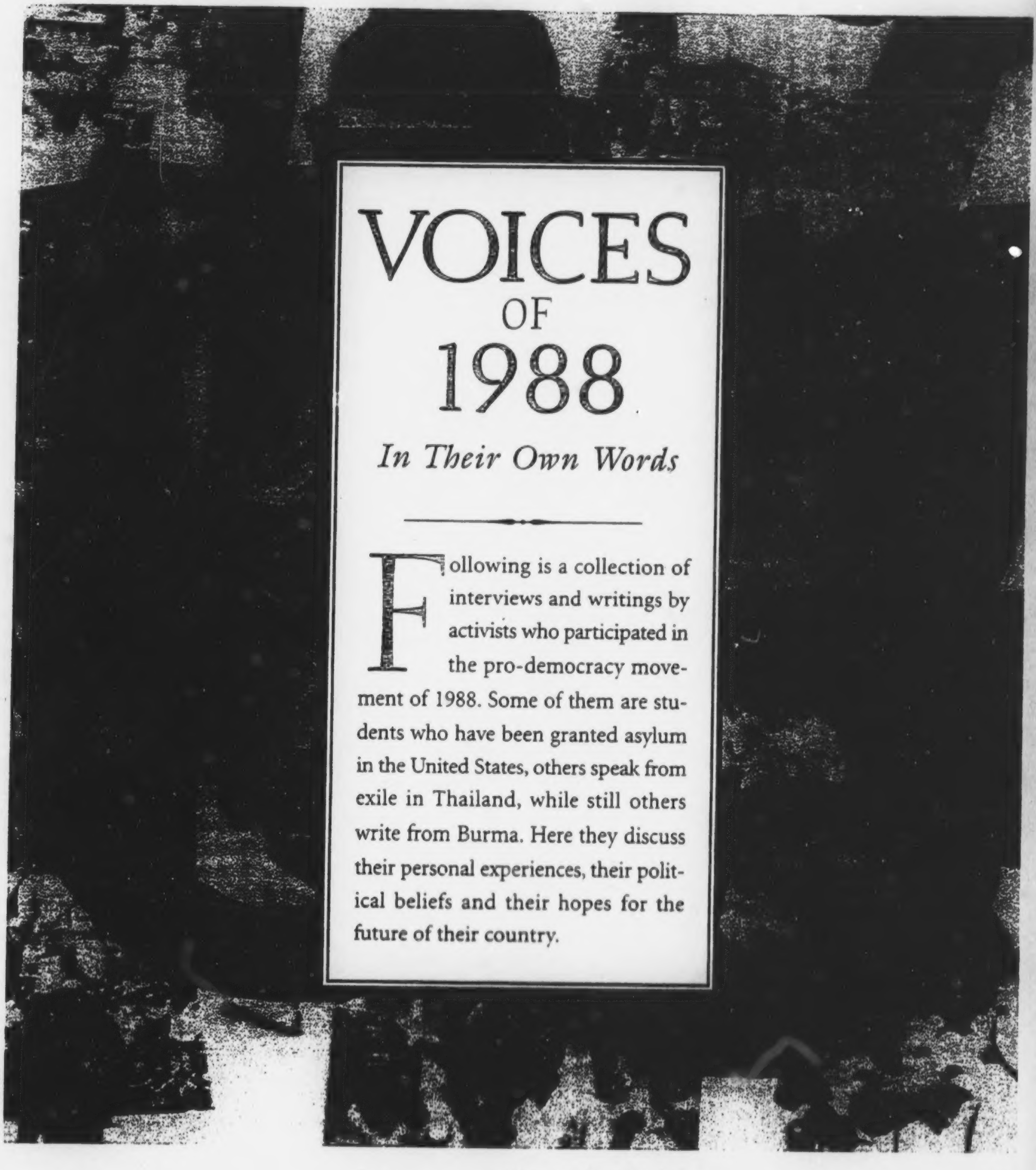
Two other villagers were burnt alive in their house, and another tied with a rope and beaten over the head to death.

In Kunhing township, 24-year-old Nang Mai was seized by the soldiers who raped her repeatedly over five days. She was then covered with pieces of wood and burned to death.

On 16 June 1997, 30 villagers returned to their village of Wan Sar Lar to retrieve food. On their return, they met soldiers. The troops killed 27 of them and threw their bodies into a river, burned their oxcarts and slaughtered their oxen for meat.

Burma

12. Personal Testimony from Burmese People



YIN MIN NWE

VOICES OF 1988

In Their Own Words

Following is a collection of interviews and writings by activists who participated in the pro-democracy movement of 1988. Some of them are students who have been granted asylum in the United States, others speak from exile in Thailand, while still others write from Burma. Here they discuss their personal experiences, their political beliefs and their hopes for the future of their country.

Interviews

IN THE UNITED STATES

As a result of their activities in 1988, the five students interviewed below were forced into exile, first to the Thai/Burma border, then to Bangkok and finally to the United States. The interviews were conducted by Zaw Win, also a Burmese student in the United States.

INTERVIEW WITH OHMAR KHIN — *Ohmar received her Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from Simons Rock College in Massachusettes and is currently an intern at the International Affairs Department of the American labor federation, the AFL-CIO, in Washington D.C.*

Q ◆ Could you describe your experiences around the 1988 pro-democracy movement?

Ohmar Khin ◆ I was a senior at Rangoon Arts and Science University majoring in Chemistry. On March 16, 1988, while walking to class with my friends, I saw some students banging drums and calling others to gather nearby the Convocation Hall. We all walked and joined those who were already there. Students from the Rangoon Institute of Technology (RIT) were protesting the incident of three days earlier. On March 13, a student named Phone Maw was shot dead by troops dispersing a demonstration. When we had a sizeable crowd, we began to march out of campus to Inya Road. While passing by Inya lake we saw troops stationed on the road, blocking our way and riot police trucks rolling down the road.

Many students ran into near-by streets and some jumped in the lake. Others were beaten and kicked by police and dragged into the trucks. I got separated from my friends and ran into one of the houses in front of the lake. The residents let me and a few others in and locked their gate. From there, I watched brutal scenes, my heart pounding with horror. My sarong was torn apart. I was holding a pencil sharpener to defend myself if I were caught. Some troops tried to climb over the gate to catch us but a Japanese diplomat next door let us climb down into his residence and hid us in his house. It was night before I could finally get back home.

That night I was determined to fight for justice in our country. When I came to the United States, VOA interviewed me and broadcast my account. After that interview the SLORC-run newspaper, *Working People's Daily*, accused me of lying when I said that students were bloodily beaten.

Q ◆ Did your family agree to your decision to become involved in politics?

A ◆ No. My mother said this kind of activity is not appropriate for a girl. My brother did not agree with me. He worked in the Department of Justice and when his higher officers showed him a snapshot of me demonstrating at a rally they warned him that he had better stop me from doing what I was doing. He got really scared and tried to talk me out of it.

Q ◆ Why did you forsake the comfort of your home and go to the border area?

A ◆ Because I thought that our peaceful struggle did not pay off. So I decided to resort to an armed struggle.

Q ◆ Can you tell me your first impression of the ethnic people?

A ◆ When I came in contact with the ethnic revolutionaries who are branded "rebels" by the government, my concept of a "rebel" changed. It dawned on me that there is a huge difference between the real-life "rebels" and the image of them projected in a media which is under total government control. When I saw some gun-toting girls, I presumed that they would rather live in peace, however, because of the repression, injustice and discrimination by the Burmese military, the armed struggle had become their last option. When I compared my feelings of injustice and my experience of witnessing the brutality of the military in 1988, I began to understand the purpose of their struggle. Then and there I felt a sense of empathy for the difficulties of ethnic peoples in the far-flung areas. I joined Battalion 102 of the All Burma Student Democratic Front (ABSDF).

Q ◆ Why did you decide to come to the US?

A ◆ I had been brought to Bangkok because I had contracted a dangerous fever and needed to be hospitalized. I thought of going back to the camp from Bangkok, but I asked myself, "What can I do when I am back in the camp?" Since I was in poor health I wouldn't be able to do anything. I realized that we will also need an edu-

cation when it's time to reconstruct our country. And I finally made up my mind to come and study in the US.

INTERVIEW WITH HLWAN MOE — *Hlwan Moe is a senior at Rutgers University in New Jersey majoring in political science and has been working for the International Rescue Committee, a New York based NGO.*

Q ✦ *How did you get involved in the pro-democracy movement?*

Hlwan Moe ✦ I was a part-time student at the Institute of Foreign Languages studying German and working at the Agriculture and Forestry Ministry. First, I got involved in the rallies that took place on the main campus of Rangoon Arts and Science University (RASU) in March 1988. I met with students from some hostels on campus, and some students from upper Burma. After a discussion, we decided to gear up our organizing work. Then schools were closed. When schools reopened in June, we resumed and intensified our activities.

Q ✦ *When did you leave Burma and why?*

A ✦ I left Burma for Thailand on September 21, 1988 after meeting with our Thai contact in Rangoon. The reason was very clear. We had to move on with our struggle for democracy despite the military coup to end it. In so doing, we needed to educate the outside world about what was going on in Burma. My colleagues also suggested that I go outside Burma on a fact-finding mission.

Q ✦ *How did you feel when you first came in contact with the ethnic people at the border?*

A ✦ My heart went out to those people whose lives are much worse than ours in Rangoon in terms of the economy, social conditions and education. I felt a responsibility for them too.

INTERVIEW WITH ZAW ZAW — *Zaw Zaw is currently studying Computer Science at Montgomery College in Maryland and is working at Refugees International in Washington, D.C.*

Q ✦ *Were you a student in 1988?*

Zaw Zaw ✦ Yes, I was a junior majoring in math at the Rangoon Arts and Science University.

Q ✦ *Had you had any issue with the Burmese government before 1988?*

A ✦ My father was sentenced to 10 years in prison because of his political activities. He ended up serving five years of his sentence, then was granted amnesty and released.

My grand-uncle was the Minister for Trade in U Nu's government. When General Ne Win staged a military coup to topple the U Nu government, all the cabinet members of the government were put in jail. So was my grand-uncle. When he was released in 1966, he went along with U Nu to the Thai-Burma border and organized an armed resistance against the Ne Win government. In 1974, my father and my uncle left home to join my grand-uncle in his resistance activities, but unfortunately they were caught by the army on their way. My uncle was killed, and my father was put in jail. My father repeatedly told me about how the military government came to power. That's why I always had a deep sense of discontent toward the military government. But my participation in the March student uprising was my first political activity, and I got arrested.

Q ✦ *Exactly why were you arrested?*

A ✦ I was one of the students who marched out onto Inya Street in response to the death of Phone Maw. It was March 16, 1988. We were blocked by the troops and got loaded onto a truck to be sent to jail. That night I was interrogated by some military intelligence personnel. They beat me several times and asked me why I got involved. First I lied. But they said they had a picture of me. The following night they did another interrogation, punching me four or five times. Worst of all, when I got sick, they did not give me access to any sort of medical treatment. I was put in jail for four months.

Q ✦ *What did you do after your arrest?*

A ✦ Two weeks after being released from prison, I took the holy order and became a novice monk together with six of my friends. Our monastery was at Yankin township in Rangoon. We discussed a strategy to intensify the student-led anti-government movement.

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Interviews

Q ✦ *What were your impressions of the ethnic groups when you reached the border?*

A ✦ I was born and raised in Rangoon. Back then, I had a different attitude toward the ethnic freedom fighters. But after I arrived I thought 'they are just like us.'

I found them very helpful and supportive to our cause. They gave us food. I know that they have the notion of being discriminated against by the Burman majority, but they showed no sign of bitterness or vengeance in dealing with us. In fact, they were extremely good to us.

Q ✦ *When did you come to the US and why?*

A ✦ I arrived in the US on November 26, 1992. Why did I go? First, I didn't like being treated as an illegal immigrant in Thailand. Second, I believed that I would be able to do more for Burma in this country as a legal resident in terms of educating people here about Burma and lobbying for the democracy movement.

INTERVIEW WITH AUNG MYO MIN — *Aung Myo Min is a graduate student at Columbia University and a reseach assistant at Human Rights Watch/Asia in New York.*

Q ✦ *Were you politically involved before the 1988 pro-democracy movement?*

Aung Myo Min ✦ Before the 1988 event I was in my final year at the Rangoon Arts and Science University majoring in English. I had a feeling that something was wrong with the country, but I didn't know what it was. When students were killed in March 1988, I began to question the justice of the society under the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) government. As things turned out, I became increasingly aware of other forms of injustice under the regime, and as a result, I became more and more politically active.

But I experienced my first real wrath against the BSPP when I saw students being killed by the government. Although I had some grievances against the government before the killing, I did not think very much about it probably because I had no personal experience of injustice.

Q ✦ *How did you respond?*

A ✦ That feeling triggered a lot of things in me. First, I got involved in the "White Bridge" event — the first student procession along Inya Lake in protest against the death of Phone Maw. Then schools were closed down until June. When schools reopened, I took part in the rallies on campus. I went to ten different townships to do organizing work. When the army cracked down on the activity centers in our area, I fled to the border and arrived in Thay-baw-boe camp.

Q ✦ *Tell us something of your experience in Thailand.*

A ✦ After leaving Burma I stayed at the border camp until the end of 1989 when I was given the assignment by the ABSDF to escort patients for hospitalization to Bangkok and to stay and look after them.

I was involved in a demonstration at the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok to commemorate the 8-8-88 uprising and the police arrested us. Six of us were caught. We were sentenced to three months in prison. After serving the three months, we were not released to the border because the UNHCR believed we were at risk of being caught by the Burmese army. We were kept in detention. It was like we were supposed to stay there forever, so we decided to stage a hunger strike in the detention center. The response of the immigration officials was to send us to the Burmese side of the border across from the town of Ranong, in southern Thailand. At Ranong, altogether 200 people were put on a boat to be sent to Kaw-Thaung. When the Thai guards who were escorting our boat turned back mid-way, we bribed the operator of the boat to turn around to go back to Ranong, which he did. One week later, we headed back to Bangkok.

Q ✦ *What would you like to see in Burma's future?*

A ✦ As a student of human rights, I'd like to see a future Burma where all the citizens are given their fundamental human rights as their inalienable rights. I'd like to see the citizens of Burma know, appreciate, and rightfully use their rights to eliminate all forms of injustice and to build up an economically developed country.

INTERVIEW WITH PHOE THET — *Phoe Thet is studying English at Montgomery College in Maryland and is an intern at the information office of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) in Washington, D.C.*

with Activists

Q ✦ Did you have any political grievances against the government before March 1988?

Phoe Thet ✦ Since I have always been interested in literature, I looked at the government from the standpoint of literature. At that time, Burmese literature was heavily influenced by Communist writings. I realized that the BSPP members were a class by themselves, to use Communist terminology. That view, however, was quite vague and I didn't know what was wrong with the country. Well, at that time, I was just an eighth standard student, and I wasn't widely-read. Only when I went to college, it dawned on me: there was a wide gap between the economic status of the residents of cities and that of people in the other parts of the country; the military became a class of its own; and the political system was not good for the country at all.

I found it really upsetting when the government kept mum on the death of Phone Maw. When I heard of the nurses being killed by the army, I got extremely mad. I couldn't bear the government anymore.

Q ✦ What were your impressions when you first saw the life of ethnic peoples on the border?

A ✦ Our group arrived in the Three Pagoda Pass in December 1988. Probably our group was the last to get there. A battle had just taken place. We lived in a bombed-out house. I didn't see the battle itself, but I did experience the impact of it. I thought as long as the military government was in power, there would be no peace in the country. My faith in the struggle for democracy deepened.

Q ✦ Did you have any confrontations with the Thai police?

A ✦ Before the time of the 1990 elections in Burma, we set up the Democratic Youth Front and went public to stand against the military-backed National Unity Party. When we got back to Bangkok, we applied for refugee status. At that time, life in Bangkok was hellish for Burmese students because of the hijacking of a Thai airplane by two Burmese activists. Police are always on the heel of all Burmese students. Thirty-three students were forced back to Burma, but they jumped from the boat to escape, and things like that. We began to have nightmares. So we, altogether 38, decided to confront the immigration police to demand that they release all Burmese students or to arrest us as well. They didn't meet our demands and instead arrested us. I stayed in jail for nine months.

I did a lot of contemplation in detention. My options were to go back to the border camp, or to stay on to lead a precarious life in Bangkok after release, or to go to a third country for refuge. At that time, there was a lot of tension in the border camps, and if I went back, I would be likely to look suspicious due to my long absence from the camp. I thought to live in Bangkok was impossible, and since I didn't want to go back to Burma, I decided to come to the US.

Q ✦ What have you done as far as your education and your continued struggle for democracy are concerned?

A ✦ I didn't come to the US to study. Simply, I took the only option left. I expected something good might come along. When I got here, my horizons expanded like they had when I went to Bangkok from the border. When I first arrived in Boston, I saw a bunch of people demonstrating for abortion rights. A thought occurred to me that we couldn't do this in our country. Nor could we in Thailand. I was impressed with the intellectual freedom here. I thought I can't do anything for my country if I am not educated. So, I chose to pursue an education.

Q ✦ What do you think of the international community's approach to Burma?

A ✦ Well, right now many countries are investing in Burma. The US is one of them, other democratic countries as well. I abhor the double standard of promoting human rights and democracy in one's own country and financially propping up foreign regimes that are violating these very rights. It is like the Burmese saying, "A jar of water in one hand and a fire ring in the other."

Q ✦ What would you like to see for the future of Burma?

A ✦ I believe everyone wants to see a peaceful Burma. As a person with a bent for literature, I would be oriented toward that area. There aren't many libraries in Burma. All the libraries we have are heavily loaded with Socialist propaganda. Inevitably, the general public doesn't have access

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to new ideas and ways of thinking. In '88, the people weren't prepared enough to be successful after the uprising. People power wasn't in full use. In my opinion, as long as the level of peoples' intellectual development is low, a country can't develop despite its reservoir of natural resources or a huge amount of foreign investments.

IN BURMA

The following letter was written by a student arrested during the democracy demonstrations in 1988. Seven years later, he writes from Thayawaddy prison where he has remained since his arrest. The letter was written to a close friend and fellow participant in the demonstrations who is now a refugee in the United States. It was clandestinely brought out of Burma by a visitor.

December 23, 1994
Thayawaddy Prison

My Dear Friend,

I have been staying here in Thayawaddy prison in such a monotonous cell. But I heard the glad news about you in the United States. I am so happy. Repeat, so happy. It is one of our day dreams come true in many nightmarish nights.

I know that you are studying. Engineering? It's good. For now in my situation, I can do nothing. But you have the opportunity and you should take it very seriously. It is our hope for success and we must not forget it.

As you know our country is in deadlock with a future dominated by the military. The international community embraces "constructive engagement." Rather than campaign for democracy, human rights, the dignity of human beings, they choose their own interests.

When I was reading about the invasion of Haiti I read: "Democracy cannot be restored or imposed on or given to a country that is not mature enough for such a system". Burma does not need an invasion, but our country is worthy of democracy for its millions of citizens. Why won't the world stand actively on the side of the democrats and the movement? In such a decisive moment how stupid the "constructive" approach!

The myth of the National Convention is that it's held to write a military-dominated constitution. The international community has the wrong image of the junta. They want to believe that the junta has "approachable" elements within it. They do not. They are tyrants. They rejected the '90 election results. The world must not forget this. Sanctions, embargoes — these words I do not hear from the U.N. or its members.

Burma is a low priority for most of the world. We must try to elevate it. You, my friend, must educate the media and others.

In spite of this I am ambitious, vigorous and enthusiastic. I cannot live if I hold only a slim hope for the future. So we must continue to try, try hard.

It is our generation that must work for change against the powerful. Those people cannot influence our circles. They are morally corrupt.

We, the youth, students citizens of Burma, eagerly want true National Reconciliation, not the slogan that has been adopted by the junta. The ethnic course, the democratic course, they can be one. We can only sort out our problems by talking to one another. My dear friend, I am not a political being, but I have no choice. We are all needed now in this episode of our national struggle.

For just now, we are apart — some in Australia, the U.S. and Thailand, others of us here at home. But in one of our tomorrows we will meet again and we will join together in our struggle.

I hear the sound of highway trucks and the iron-strike of time. In Burma, in Thayawaddy jail, in one of its cells, on a winter night the wind makes me shiver. But I warm at the thought of my partners and our shared beliefs.

WE DARE. WE MUST WIN.

Signed,
3:00 a.m. – 23/12/94

The passage below is taken from a letter written by the sister of a Burmese student who is now a refugee in the United States. She talks of the situation for the family that remains in Burma.

March 8, 1995

Dear younger sister,

...This coming May, SLORC will relocate the houses in our neighborhood. Where will we go? It is said that hotels or new buildings will replace our home. It is also said that we will get a room to live somewhere when the construction is done. But how can we be sure?

What is certain is that our family's financial situation will be more desperate than today. You know

PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

Interview: 5-HRV: Detention, Slavery, Torture, Execution

Name :	Kyaw Win
Age:	24
Sex :	Male
Ethnicity:	Burman
Religion:	Buddhist
Occupation:	Day Labourer
Address :	Kyaikto Township, Mon State
Interviewed:	3 February 1995
Source:	KHRG

On 2 January 1995, the village headman summoned me and took me to the police station in Kyaikto together with my cousin Lu Maw. We were detained there for five days. Then LIB 207, under the command of LID 22, took us by truck beyond Pa-an and Hlaing Bwe to where Battalion 962 has a camp. When we got there, every porter had to carry six 81mm mortar shells from Battalion 962 to Manerplaw. We were fed two meals a day, but we only got a canteen-lid full of rice for two men. On the way to Manerplaw, there was fighting at Bo Laung hill. When we got near Manerplaw, we only got a short rest and then all the porters had to move on with soldiers patrolling a road. Later we found out it was the road to Mae Tha Waw. We had to stay for three days with the soldiers who were guarding that road. The soldiers wore uniforms with a badge on one shoulder showing a fan, and number 99 on the other shoulder *[indicating LID 99]*. There were about 50 soldiers carrying short guns.

Whenever we couldn't carry the loads, we were beaten brutally. On 26 January, Lu Maw was beaten with a two-inch-thick cane stick because he couldn't carry his load of 81mm mortar shells. He got many bruises on his thighs so he couldn't walk, but he still had to carry ammunition. On 28 January, when we reached a hill, he was really feeble and couldn't walk or carry anymore. As he begged to stop, they only beat him more. The soldiers said my cousin was not useful anymore, "so we'll kill him and then we can pay the compensation for his life". Finally the soldiers had to support him on each side so he could reach top of the hill. When we reached the hilltop, they kicked him back down. Then the soldiers dragged him up the hill again. They tied a piece of cloth over his mouth, and then Sgt Toe Toe killed him by bayoneting with Carbine rifle in the left side of my cousin's ribs. Seven soldiers held the foot of the dead body, dragged away, and nobody knows where they buried him. Another Sergeant saw me secretly watching my cousin being beaten and stabbed by Sgt Toe Toe, so he kicked me with his combat boot, beat me with a piece of bamboo, then took the knife he was using to slice up banana stems for food, and cut off my little finger.

My cousin's name was Lu Maw, his nickname was Zaw Zaw Htoo. He was 18 years old. He was a Burman Buddhist and worked as a day labourer. He was not a member of any group. He was killed by Sgt Toe Toe from LIB 205 of LID 22.

Interview: 33-HRV: Refugee, Child, Livelihood, Execution, women

Name :	Naw Krit Heh
Age:	27
Sex :	Female
Ethnicity:	Karen
Religion:	Christian
Family:	Married, had a three-year-old child and in pregnant
Address:	From Mae Mweh Hta Area, Karen State; later a refugee in Mae Paw Mu Hta, Thailand
Source:	KHRG

I came to Thailand one year ago, first to Pway Baw Lu and then to section 4 of Mae Paw Mu Hta. We left Mae Paw Mu Hta, and last Thursday [20 February 1995] we were being moved here. We were on the truck with our belongings. I was with my husband and child, and also my parents. I was in the back, just behind the cab. I saw soldiers, Burmese. Three of them, with guns. They were in military uniforms. The colour was green, Burmese green. They were Burma Army uniforms, but I didn't see the badge. [*Note: the cut and colour of Burma Army uniforms are noticeably different from KNLA and other opposition uniforms.*] They looked like Burmese soldiers. They said "Stop", in Karen. Two of them were by the side the road and one was in front of us. The two by the side of the road stopped the truck. After we stopped, they started shooting at us. The one in front of the truck shot first. I couldn't count the shots. They shot constantly, and while they were shooting we tried to run away. They shot their mortar [*M79 grenade*] at the truck. When it exploded, I was hurt by a splinter and I jumped out and ran. My child was in my arms, and my husband ran in front of me. They kept shooting. I didn't follow my husband, I ran another direction. I ran down the slope and then crossed the field. My child was wounded just a little. When the mortar exploded, a splinter hit the glass windshield of the truck and a piece of glass hit him [*his name is Nay Hta Ghay, three years old*]. We ran to Tee Law Hta. Then the following day, people took us by car to the clinic [*at Mae Ra Mu Klo camp. Naw Krit Heh had a wound behind her left ear and three small superficial wounds on her back*]. My husband was also wounded. My mother Naw Peh died in the truck. We were sitting down together in the truck. When she stood up to run, the Burmese shot at her. When the mortar exploded, I looked for a second at my mother and then I ran away. May Paw was my sister-in-law. I saw when she was shot. She was shot in the head and she died on the spot. They were both shot by AK47 bullets. They shot us at Thay Wah Der, just a few minutes from our old camp [Meh Po Kee]. We left everything in the truck. I dared not go back to get them. People who went back saw my belongings and said they were all stained with blood.

Interview: 35-HRV: Refugees, Livelihood

Name : Naw Shay Roh
Age: 42
Sex: Female
Ethnicity: Karen
Religion: Christian
Date: 20 February 1995
Source: KHRG

I was standing in the back of the truck holding on to the side. I saw two men shooting, but I didn't see the man who stopped the car. I saw them standing and crouching and shooting their guns down. I had no time to look — when they shot, I ran. All five of my children were on the truck. My youngest is five years old. As soon as I jumped down, I heard an explosion. I grabbed my youngest child and ran. I fell down into the gully. I didn't even know I was wounded until I got to the stream and I saw the blood running down from my knee. The others were the same too.

Interview: 36-HRV: Refugees, Livelihood, Women, Child

Name : Naw Meh Ta Ker
Age: 17
Sex : Female
Ethnicity: Karen
Religion: Christian
Date: 20 February 1995
Source: KHRG

When they started shooting, I was so afraid that I went like this [*she hid her head in her arms*] and I didn't see anything. I dared not look up. Then I looked. I didn't see the one who stopped the truck, but I saw the ones on the hillside. They were wearing army green, like Tatmadaw [*Burma Army*] uniforms. They shouted "Whay!" [*this could be either a Karen or Burmese shout*]. The young woman died near me, and the old woman too. Naw May Paw was laying like this by her bundle, and her child was sitting there. I was afraid, I saw people die, I saw Naw May Paw's brain coming out and I saw blood so I slid down out of the truck and ran. [*According to other witnesses the child, about four years old, was left behind and stayed by his dead mother all night long, until he was found along with the bodies the following morning.*]

Interview: 37-HRV: Slavery, Torture, Disappearance

Name :	Mya Sein
Age:	28
Sex :	Male
Occupation:	Trishaw driver
Address:	Moulmein Town, Mon State
Interviewed:	18 March 1995
Source:	KHRG

I was taken on 7 March 1995. I was on the street with my trishaw. I was taken to an army base at Thein Zayat, near Thaton. I was then sent to Pa-an and then to Thingan Nyi Naung with other porters. I had to carry 75mm shells for IB 2 under the command of LID 44. I was kicked twice by a soldier when I was getting tried. One 60- year-old man asked for extra food, so the soldier hit him in the eye. His eye was bleeding. A 70-year-old man died because he had to work too much and the soldiers did not give him water. His body was left under a tree. When people die they are just crossed off the list of porters. The soldiers never tell the family that they died, instead they say they escaped. I fled on 14 March when there was fighting around Wah Lay. I was taken as a porter once before, three years ago, and taken to somewhere across from Mae Sot *[i.e. near Myawaddy]*.

Interview: 38-HRV: Detention, Slavery, Torture

Name :	Than Myint
Age:	35
Sex :	Male
Occupation:	Farmer
Address:	Thanbyuzayat Town, Mon State
Interviewed:	18 March 1995
Source:	KHRG

I was taken more than 20 days ago. The village headman called me and I was put on a truck by the IB 31. I was held for eight days in Thanbyuzayat and had to work building roads, breaking stones, and digging trenches. Then I was sent to the base of the LIB 104 near Moulmein. I was sent by boat with LIB 104 to Kyon Doe and then by car to Thingan Nyi Naung. We were then taken south to Palu Area. I carried goods for two days and then I got sick as we were walking through the jungle and the soldiers threw me under a tree. I got up continued walking slowly. Win Tin and Mya Sein saw me, helped me and gave me water. We escaped together. I still have pains in my chest.

Interview: 65-HRV: Detention, Torture, Livelihood, Slavery

Name :	Maung Tin Win
Age:	39
Sex :	Male
Ethnicity:	Mon/Indian
Occupation:	Porter labourer
Address :	Moulmein Town, Mon State
Interviewed:	28 April 1995
Source:	KHRG

I am from Moulmein. While I was returning home from my job, a military truck suddenly stopped in front of me, and soldiers grabbed and put me on the truck. I saw there were already about 16 people arrested on the truck. We were taken to Kyaik Pa Nei jetty. We slept one night there. I don't remember the date — it was nearly two months ago. I had never been a porter before. Our family always pays all their fees and 'donations'. But this time I never got a chance to contact my family. Later, I found out that SLORC was sending five battalions to attack Maw Kee village, so they needed many porters. That's why the soldiers were arresting everyone in Moulmein, Mudon, Martaban, etc. In Maw Kee, I saw LIBs 104, 118, and 1. LIB 2 was there but they went back. On the way, I had to carry six 81mm mortar shells. I had to carry them too far. I have scars on my back. It's been a long time now, but they're still not better. On the way, our group carried the heaviest ammunition and the soldiers always ordered us to move quickly, so we were very tired. One porter could not walk anymore, so the soldiers beat him on his head and body. It looked like they would beat him to death. His hands were crushed. He was still alive, but they just left him near the path. I saw three other porters like this while we were carrying the supplies and ammunition.

From Ka Neh Lay to Maw Kee we were cut off because of the Karen resistance, and then I saw four porters die without anyone helping them. The dying porters asked for water but we had no water bottles — only the soldiers had them. Some porters bought water from the soldiers. One of the hired porters [*paid by villagers to go in their place*] had malaria when the Karen attacked the soldiers. He was too weak and thirsty, and he could not get up. There were no streams nearby. He asked water from the soldiers, but they ignored him. Then he offered 200 Ks for a bottle of water, and a soldier gave him water and took the money. The porter drank all the water and then he seemed better. I am telling the truth. We were all so thirsty. Later, we found a stream. If we hadn't, I think I would have died of thirst.

Interview: 148-HRV: Torture, Livelihood, Slavery, Refugee, Execution, Displacement

Name: Nai Ngwe Htun
Age: 25
Sex: Male
Ethnicity Mon
Religion: Buddhist
Occupation: Labourer
Address: Baleh Kapol village, Ye Township, Mon State
Interviewed: 30 April 1995
Source: HURFOM

[*The following interview was made with among 200 new arrivals to Halockhani refugee camp in March and April 1995. Most of them were from Moulmein and Thaton districts.*]

In 1994, although I stayed at Halockhani refugee camp of Baleh Donephai village, after it was attacked by Burmese troops I went away because I dared not stay here again. When the Burmese troops used men as human shields in advancing to attack the main Halockhani camp, I escaped from their arrest because I was in the jungle to cut bamboo shoots. When I returned back in the evening, the whole village was burnt down by SLORC IB 62 and my wife was crying and busy with picking some remained belongings like rice, clothes, pots and etc., which were left in our half-burnt house. And we fled together with other refugees to the Thai Border Police checkpoint for safety. We stayed at checkpoint with temporary shelter nearly for two months. After the Thai Army took the rice store in the camp, the leaders told us to return to our former site again. Although I would like to build my house in main camp, it was impossible and I decided to stay in Baleh Kapol village where there were only five houses at that time. After we moved, it increased to about 20 households because some families of refugees joined in. The houses situated separately in the slope of mountain about one day walk's from Beleh Donephai.

On 6 April, while I was on my way from my hut after cutting heavy bamboo, about 200 troops from LIB 403 from Three Pagoda pass arrested me and I had no chance to escape because of carrying heavy load. They also arrested other 30 porters. When they passed closely to the Baleh Donephai, there was small fighting with

Mon troops and the porters had to carry two wounded soldiers. As soon as I was arrested, I was subjected to beating and asked about the activities of Mon and Karen troops. When I responded by shaking my head which meant I did not know because I did not understand Burmese well, they beat me again mostly with rifle butts. Initially, they gave me only one bag of the wounded soldiers to carry. On the following day, when they arrived one Karen village of Kamon they shot four innocent Karen villagers to dead. The victims who just came out from the village was regarded as Karen soldiers who tried to ambush them and they shot dead. I witnessed they died on spot and we also stepped on the dead bodies.

In the evening we arrived at another Karen village again. As soon as they arrived the village, they caught animals in the houses and took the belongings of the villagers. Except the elder persons, most villagers had already fled. Half an hour after we left that village, the Karen guerrillas ambushed them again. It lasted only five minutes and one Burmese soldier wounded. The commander was angry too much and he kicked all porters with his combat boots. And the porters were forced to carry the wounded soldier. They changed my load by forcing to carry six 60mm mortar shells. It was heavier than before.

All porters became weaker and weaker because the soldiers fed us very only a small meal. They told us they were short of food and had no extra food for us. On the third day, they fed us only one meal per day. As they were very afraid of attacks by Mon or Karen guerrillas, they did not use the common way and swerved the way by using the mountainous areas. On the fourth day, one old Mon man was severely beaten and forced to carry by one sergeant although he was unable to manage it. The man said to the sergeant, " I cannot go far away by carrying the heavy loads, please put me here sir". We heard his voice, but no one dared to watch. Other two privates joined the sergeant in beating him several time and at the end, they kicked him from the high and steep mountain. We heard the crying of the man like " please help me, please help". No one could help him. As I knew, he came to the border areas to trade cattle. After he sold his cattle, he was arrested by Burmese troops on his half way back to home. I did not know his native place. I thought he was about 50. By swerving the ways, the trip took for ten days to arrive Alaskan military outpost. We, all porters, were weak and tired. As soon as we arrived at Alaskan, the soldiers detained all porters and did not give any food for one day and one night. On the following day, IB 403 troops returned to its headquarters in Tavoy and released all of us. Therefore, I quickly returned and arrived at home five days after being released. At home, I got serious sickness and the villagers brought me to treat in Halockhani clinic and also my wife moved in. After I was recovered, I decided to stay in Halockhani again which must be more possible for our family to get food and I hopes we can avoid such terrible portering.

Interview: 231-HRV: Livelihood, Slavery, Livelihood, Torture, Execution

Name:	Zaw Lwin
Age:	19
Sex:	Male
Parents:	U San Tin and Daw Kyi Kyi
Family:	Married to Malar with two sons
Occupation:	Street vendor
Address:	Bote Ta Lote village, Thazi Township, Mandalay Division
Source:	ABSDF

I was a friend of Soe Hlaing, Aung Aung and Myo Naing from Bote Ta Lote village in Thazi Township. These three friends were very much attached to my wife and sons. My parents also loved my friends as their own sons. I always regarded 30-year-old Myo Naing as an eldest brother among three of them. Myo Naing always taught us right from wrong. We really had the memories to share in their simple lives as farmers.We planned to visit my aunt in Kwe Pwe village, Taungoo Township in Pegu Division, after the harvest. Although our plan came true, our fate turned to the bad side since we were arrested by IB 234 on our way back home. Our lives as porters were much more difficult than we had been as farmers. We were forced to carry one thousand rounds of G3- G4 rifles. We were severely beaten if our movements slowed down because of exhaustion. We were very pained to see that the soldiers abandoned porters, who were simply left without food, without medicine and without security. I later felt that it was luckier for me to have been left behind like those others. Because my three friends were ruthlessly killed on the third day of their portering. The victims had their throats cut with a knife by Bo Yat Kha from 2nd column of IB 234. They had fallen sick and were too weak to move their heavy loads and had asked Bo Yat Kha to let them rest for a short while. The result was summary execution; cold-blooded murder. I tried my best to find an opportunity to escape. I pretended that I could tolerate the exhaustion, the burdens on my back, the hunger and sickness, and the beatings by soldiers. During the third week after my arrest and portering, I was accidentally left alone from both the military columns and other porters. I rushed as soon as possible and was rescued by KNLA troops at a place situated between Leikpya Gyi and Mongdwin Gyi village in Thandaung Township, Karen State. I have been haunted by this tragic blow of the loss of my friends and have been constantly horrified by the memory of their brutal murder. I have no idea whether to remain on the border or go back to Burma. I may need a long time to heal both my mental and physical pain.

Interview: 298 - HRV: Execution

Name:	Naw Say Wah
Age:	22
Sex:	Female
Ethnicity:	Pwo Karen
Religion:	Buddhist
Family:	Married with two daughters (age 3 months and 3 years)
Occupation:	Farmer
Address:	Kya Inn Seik Gyi Township, Karen State
Interviewed:	21 December 1995
Source:	KHRG

[*Naw Say Wah's husband who was 37 years was killed by SLORC on 17 or 18 December 1995 — see interview 299.*]

My husband went to another village to do farm work with other people there. It was within the last 10 days. They arrested him at that village. He was going to get some cattle vaccinated when a column of Burmese soldiers arrived and arrested him. They took him to the military camp, about three miles away. He was there for four days. I went to the camp along with the village headwoman. The officer asked me, "Don't you love your husband? What does he do for his living?" I said, "He is a farmer." We asked to see him but they did not allow. I had to come back home. They said that after one or two days he would be released for sure. But after two days I heard news that he was killed, and they told me to make offerings to the monks. Now I am living with my mother. I am so desperate because of my two children — the elder is three years and the younger is only three months old.

According to Amnesty International, there are over 2,000 political prisoners in Burma, and a great majority of them are with the 1990 election-winning National League for Democracy (NLD) party led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. This Urgent Action section single out the most prominent colleagues and aides of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Please join the letter writing & media campaign for the release of these imprisoned Burmese democrats who have risked their lives and families in pursuit of democracy, freedom, and human rights for the 45 million people of Burma.

Urge the SLORC to release U Win Htein, U Win Tin, U Aye Win, U Cho Aung Than, Daw Cho Mya Than (not in the picture), and all political prisoners immediately.

Send appeals to:
Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman
State Law and Order Restoration Council
c/o Director of Defence Services Intelligence Ministry of Defence
Signal Pagoda Road
Dagon Post Office
Yangon
Union of Burma (Myanmar)
Telexes: 21316

U Win Htein

"Prominent personal assistant to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and former officiating major from Burma Armed Forces under General Ne Win's government, U Win Htein is serving a long imprisonment with hard labor. He was imprisoned before and treated as a political prisoner. He served one of the longest sentences of those arrested for their involvement in the National League for Democracy party (NLD). U Win Htein continued to work for the NLD after his release on February 1995. During the crackdown of the NLD in September of 1996, he was re-arrested along with hundreds of other NLD activists, MPs, and supporters, and held in Insein jail on the outskirt of Burma's capital, Rangoon. A few months ago, U Win Htein was transferred to Myingyan prison in Upper Burma, one of the country's most notorious torture camps. Currently, SLORC authorities treat him like a regular criminal convict. He is kept in shackles and his head is shaved. Furthermore,

he is denied proper medical treatment in spite of his poor heart conditions and hypertension, and allowed only monthly family visits as opposed to fortnightly ones. U Win Htein is his mid-50s."

U Win Tin

"U Win Tin, member of the NLD Central Executive Committee Member, is one of the country's highly respected journalists. During his tenure as the Chief Editor of an influential "Hanthawadi" newspaper in Mandalay, he co-founded the Saturday Literary Circle/Roundtable, a politically engaged literary group of progressive intellectuals in Upper Burma. Later he was promoted deputy-Minister of Information and Culture by General Ne Win himself, the then Burma's Head of State. U Win Tin refused to accept the promotion offer and continued working in the Hanthawadi writing and publishing critical articles and editorials about General Ne Win's socialist government. which finally led to the closing of the newspaper.

After the brutal military crackdown of the 1988 pro-democracy movement, U Win Tin re-emerged as the leading intellectual working closely with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi within the NLD. He was arrested in 1989 and is now serving 22 years imprisonment in Burma's infamous Insein jail. He is in his late 60's."

"SLORC targets Aung San families for persecution:

from left to right, U Aye Win, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, U Cho Aung Than

Relatives of U Aung San, the most revered national hero and the architect of Burma's independence from Britain. was assassinated at the age of 32 in July 1947. Aung San led an exemplary life completely devoted to public service. This legacy lives on as his own daughter, and nieces and nephews follow his footsteps in Burma's struggle for democracy and freedom at great personal costs."

U Aye Win (left):

"U Aye Win, a first cousin and personal aide to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, has been in Insein jail since 1996 serving long prison sentence. He was an accountant in Burma Socialist Programme Party government of General Ne Win. His father U Ba Win was assassinated on the eve of Burma's independence in July 1947 along with Aung San on and several other cabinet members. His younger brother Dr. Sein Win, a MP-elect in the 1990 elections, heads the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (in-exile). "

For U Cho Aung Than (right):

"U Cho Aung Than, personal aide to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, is a son of U Aung Than, an older brother of U Aung San. When U Aye Win was jailed, U Cho Aung Than took over the former's responsibilities working closely with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. He was recently given 10 year imprisonment for allegedly smuggling abroad a Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's video-taped appeal to ASEAN to refuse membership to SLORC.

His sister Daw Nge Ma Ma Than (a.k.a) Daw Cho Mya Than is also serving 10 year imprisonment in Insein jail with her husband U Myint Swe. (Their pictures are not included here)."

Amnesty International: Fear of safety of the following individuals

8/18/97

U Shwe Myint Aung, alias Myint Swe
Daw Khin Ma Than, alias Nge Ma Ma Than (f)
Cho Aung Than
U Myo Aung Thant
U Khin Kyaw
Khin Maung Win alias Ko Sunny

U Shwe Myint Aung, also known as Myint Swe, was not released as reported in the previous update to this Urgent Action (ASA 16/23/97, 22 July). He, his wife Daw Khin Ma Than, also known as Nge Ma Ma Than, and her brother Cho Aung Than were sentenced to 10 years imprisonment on 15 August at a court inside Insein Prison, Myanmar largest detention facility. Cho Aung Than and Daw Khin Ma Than are first cousins of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

All three received a three-year sentence under the Unlawful Associations Act and a seven-year sentence under the Emergency Provisions Act. The broadly-worded provisions of these two laws are often used by the military authorities to hand down long terms of imprisonment for peaceful political activity. U Myo Aung Thant also received the same sentence in addition to a sentence of life imprisonment for ?high treason?. He was accused by the authorities of attempting to bring explosives into Myanmar from Thailand. There is no further information about the status or whereabouts of Khin Maung Win alias Ko Sunny and U Khin Kyaw.

Amnesty International has no further details about their trial, but fears that the four may have been tortured or ill-treated during their pre-trial interrogation. Trials of political prisoners in Myanmar fall far short of international fair trial standards. Prisoners are seldom allowed legal counsel and trials are normally conducted in closed session. Amnesty International is also concerned about the state of their health and the conditions of their imprisonment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 23 July 1997 Myanmar was formally admitted into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at a ceremony in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, amid widespread protests from Asian human rights groups. The long terms of imprisonment recently handed down to Myint Swe, Nge Ma Ma Than, Cho Aung

Than and U Myo Thant belie ASEAN hopes that Myanmar would improve its human rights record after it was admitted to the regional grouping. The other ASEAN countries are: Thailand, Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, Laos, Vietnam and the Philippines.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please write one final letter to the Myanmar authorities expressing your concern about the health of Myint Swe, Nge Ma Ma Than, Cho Aung Than, and U Myo Thant. Also express concern that they may not have received fair trials. This action will then close and the case will be transferred to other AI Networks.

The Free Burma Coalition
c/o Dept. of Curriculum and Instruction
University of Wisconsin
225 N. Mills St.
Madison, WI 53706
Tel: 608-827-7734
Fax: 608-263-9992
Email: zni@students.wisc.edu

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Burma

13. SLORC/SPDC Defends Itself

When will the Snake

Crowd outside home of Aung San Suu Kyi during a recent "weekend talk" by NLD leadership

LESLIE KEAN

This article appeared in the government-controlled Burmese-language newspaper KYEMON on May 19 and 20, 1996 and was translated by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS).

Act End?"

The "snake charming act" (with three poisonous snakes — one female Cobra, a banded Krait, and a Viper) which usually begins at about 1600 in the afternoon every Saturday and Sunday on the platform by the road in front of No 54-56, University Avenue, Yangon [Rangoon] has been going on for many months. How long will they continue the act? When will it end?

Dear leaders, who are striving steadfastly day and night for building a united, developed, prosperous and modern nation in Myanmar or in the Myanmar community:

I read an article by West German historian Michael Sturmer on page 38 in the *Newsweek* magazine of 10 September 1990. Take note of this quote: "When empires collapse, they do so with a bang not with a whimper."

To judge whether this historian's proposition is correct or not, we can consider the collapse of the Soviet Union, which thrived for over 70 years, and that of the communist countries of East Europe, the German Democratic Republic, Romania, and Yugoslavia (and how the rulers who lost power were killed or tortured).

Unexpectedly, in the post Burma Socialist Programme Party's 26-year era, there were [the] 8-8-88 democracy and political disturbances and the formation of various "unions" of universities, schools, factories and mills, offices, and governmental and private organizations (a primary school union, a pupils union, a monks union, a young monks union, a doctors union, a teachers union, a nurses union, a nuns union, a beauticians-gays-union, a housekeepers union, an aged persons union, and a trishaw peddlers union) all over the country led by leftist, centrist, and rightist political opportunists, those who were old members of the Revolutionary Council, senior and junior ministers of the Burma Socialist Programme Party [BSPP], military officers, old White-

BY U THAN MAUNG

and Red-flag communists, and old socialists of the AFPFL [Anti-Fascists People's Freedom League]. They incited huge public riots and demonstrations and waged strikes all over the country, opened strike camps, coerced the Burma Socialist Programme Party, pulled the administrative machinery to a halt, prompted anarchic acts in both urban and rural areas, and elected Daw Suu Kyi, who, after marrying an Englishman and living in England for 28 years, was showing instant "love" for Myanmar, as "a great, great leader"; and due to political coercion and anarchism, the state power collapsed with a bang within a few days.

The opinion that "When empires collapse, they do so with a bang not with a whimper" is very well-founded.

"The collapse or annihilation of rulers and empires comes with a bang leaving no time for whining," and all collapses have happened in this manner.

Bitter and painful lessons can be learned from various communities or the socioeconomic and political situations of various countries.

The collapse of "human civilizations," including the Roman civilization, which emerged 1,600 years ago, can be studied in world history.

Karl Marx and Engels said "a race should and must take lessons from countries that developed or collapsed earlier."

Shin Maha Ratthasara [renowned Burmese laureate] exhorted us to study diligently to be able to say what we want to say without forgetting the meaning so that we will be bold and have no fear like a lion, and our resolve will be firm and strong like a pillar. What I would like to tell some SLORC [State Law and Order Restoration Council] leaders, who are striving strenuously for a new united, prosperous, and modern nation in the course of "revolution from above," is this...

...Some military leaders, descendants of old rulers who felt bitter about anarchism and had learned lessons from the 60-year political history of 1926 to 1988, rescued Myanmar communities vigilantly and conscientiously; these were on the verge of collapse from anarchic acts such as the 8-8-88 demonstrations, strikes, and strike camps, huge riots, coercions, arson, lootings, destructions, and brutal killings. The "8-8-88 heroes," "the strike committees," and "the strike camps" or overt and underground destructionists who were becoming political anarchists were demolished.

Various political opportunists who were silent and had not dared to show their "heads" during the entire 26-year BSPP rule reappeared like croaking "frogs" in the rainy season and formed more than 200 political parties without having any political ideology.

The "enlightened top brass" of the military leaders:

a. Disbanded the one-party system,

b. Scrapped the socialist economy,

c. Is sowing seeds to establish a multiparty democracy that will be suitable for the socioeconomic development of developing nations,

d. Is slowly and gradually implementing a market economy, and

e. Has officially permitted foreign investment and technical know-how after promulgating the necessary laws.

With the aforementioned political policies of the SLORC, the formation and movement of political parties was allowed in accord with item-c.

Because of this permission, various political opportunists who were silent and had not dared to show their "heads" during the entire 26-year BSPP rule reappeared like croaking "frogs" in the rainy season and formed more than 200 political parties without having any political ideology.

This can be correctly viewed politically and ideologically as "the political retaliation" of coercive and anarchic politicians who came out of the 8-8-88 movement and the strike camps.

It can be seen in world history that the "revolutions from below" such as the Great October Revolution, which took place in Russia in the early 20th century (1917), and the French Revolution of the 18th century (1789) collapsed and are no more in existence at the present day because they could not practically carry out the socioeconomic development of the world's communities.

The 8-8-88 groups and strikers led by Daw Suu Kyi attempted in 1988, 1989, and 1990 to copy the type of old-fashioned revolution found in the Russian and French Revolutions, which does not conform to the needs of the times, the place, or the community in Myanmar.

The formation of over 200 political parties was the outcome of this process.

Daw Suu Kyi's group attempted to replenish the faulty socioeconomic revolutionary ideals of the post-18th century and early 20th century periods.

If we objectively review the formation and organization of the Daw Suu Kyi-led National League for Democracy, which was the most amazingly popular party of the over 200 political parties, it can be seen that:

It could not stand for long as a united, consolidated party organization like the GCBA [General Council of Burmese Associations], the Doh Bamar Asiayon Thakhin Groups, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, the AFPFL and the Pa-hta-sa Party, which had emerged and become very prominent 60 years before it. It drowned in the splits of political history.

Evident proof of this was that the "National League for Democracy, NLD", split into two — the Bogyoke Aung Gyi-led group and the Daw Suu Kyi-led group — less than two years after its formation.

It can be seen that even within the current female-led NLD of Daw Suu Kyi there are an old military officers group, an intellectual group, a student youth group, and an old AFPFL, communist, and socialist group.

If the more than 60-year-old Myanmar political history is studied appropriately, it can be clearly seen that there has been no political party able to effectively serve the national interest (in the political, economic, and social sectors) up to now (1996).

Regarding the political parties that can serve the national interest effectively, an East European politician once said:

"Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa do not in fact have political parties in the Western sense. They are only groups brought together under a prominent leader, who for the most part dwarfs the entire party in importance."

Now, firm proof of this statement can be seen in the prominence of Lenin, Stalin, Mao Zedong, Chiang Kai-shek, Ho Chi Minh, Tito, Ceausescu, Bogyoke Aung San, Thakhin Soe, Thakhin Than Tun, and General Ne Win and their leadership in their respective political parties and organizations.

The prominence of Suu Kyi and the popularity of her National League for Democracy also fits in with the aforementioned statement.

Suu Kyi's prominence dwarfs her party in importance. Her party is not as prominent or important as her [*sic*].

Therefore, the so-called "revolutions" in the post 18th century and the early 20th century are, in fact, "revolutions from below".

The politically and theoretically enlightened top brass of the Tatmadaw [Defense Services] leaders took over the responsibilities of the State with goodwill and conviction to serve the national interest; they do not behave as Daw Suu Kyi's group does, which whispers or shouts slanders in its smear campaign against SLORC, saying that "they took over state power forcibly to protect the life and property of the Burma Socialist Programme Party top leaders and themselves."

The validity of such accusations and allegations can be checked with the following quotable quote:

"England, it is true in causing social revolution in Hindustan (in India), was actuated only by the vilest interests, and was stupid in its manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may not have been the crimes of England she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution." ("Karl Marx On The British Rule in India," *New York Daily Tribune*, June 25, 1853.)

Karl Marx and Engels made this assessment of the social revolution in India caused by England, the colonial power, which transformed the old-fashioned Indian civilization into a modern one and dragged it into the civilized world community.

Dear England-returnee miss and your accomplices, when any ideological assessment of the SLORC's activities is made, there can be no question that it took over the duties of the state with goodwill. It is necessary only to observe that SLORC is building the nation into one that is united, prosperous, and modern in thoughts, words, and deeds. In politics, it is reasonable and realistic to find a solution to the problem not in words (oration), but with deeds (practice).

It is easy to make an outcry, just as an English saying has it: "Easier said than done."

The England-returnee miss, who, after living in England humbly for about 28 years, is showing off herself in Myanmar in a saucy manner, and her accomplices should consider and logically apply Karl Marx's aforementioned deep thought.

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Desiring and willing are not important; they do not play a decisive and primary role. Only what is done practically with a theoretical concept and a clear and vigilant theoretical outlook is important and plays the primary, decisive role.

There is an English proverb: "If wishes were horses, beggars might ride". Priority must be given to what is more than what is wished to be.

Dear SLORC leaders, one of the verses of the Magadeva Treatise says if a man is wise and has a good heart, he can finish every task, big or small, like a sculptor who carves any way he wishes. I will not go into detail about the meaning of this verse, for it would amount to teaching a crocodile how to swim or preaching to a monk.

To shine in wisdom and knowledge, the state leader (government) must possess proper reasoning and a clear theoretical concept and outlook. It is also exhorted in the Lawkaniti Treatise that a ruler must constantly be diligent and vigilant. The ruler (government) usually encounters an enemy within and without as well as the lackeys of the alien. There are plenty of examples in world political history. It is therefore essential to have constant vigilance against these dangers. According to Lawkaniti, contentment will lead to the downfall of a ruler (government)...

...As a Myanmar saying puts it: "Starting from the rubbish, the fire burnt down the mansion." Beginning with a fight between some students of the Rangoon Institute of Technology and some youths of the Insein Gyogon Ward at a roadside tea shop, a series of strikes such as the Phone Maw strike, the 8-8-88 strike, and the general strike broke out all over the country, and within a short period, anarchy was rampant and the country was on the verge of collapse. It was a regrettable experience.

Now, I would like to advise the SLORC leaders, who are striving for socioeconomic restructuring, to get rid of the rubbish that can start a fire and burn down the mansion and extinguish the remnants, which can flare up at any time.

"In this process of making positive endeavors of the government, certain lackeys of the imperialists are resorting to various means to create instability in the state. To breed suspicions and divisions among the national races and to slacken or impede pace of development of the national economy" (Lt. Gen.Khin Nyunt – *The New Light of Myanmar* 24/3/96, page 1, col 3).

It may happen that the snake charmer can accidentally be bitten by the female cobra, the banded krait, or the viper. If the snake charmer is not skilled, one of the three poisonous snakes might escape and bite people.

What he means is that there are lackeys of the West who are creating instability within the country and suspicions and disunity among our national brethren and attempting to make national economic development stagnant.

The SLORC leaders must therefore have constant revolutionary vigilance. They have to act like a lion but not like a tiger. The lion king always makes the same effort to catch his prey, big or small. He never reduces his diligence and loses his vigilance.

The SLORC, which is leading a kind of revolution after demolishing the old Myanmar political, economic, and social systems, triumphed over the huge riots; the anarchic persons who threw stones, committed arson, lootings, destruction, and brutal killings in the 8-8-88 uprising; the strike camps; the strike committees; and the various unions that emerged in 1988-89.

It has won victory over the one-party system and the socialist economic system. It has made peace with 16 groups of our brethren, who resorted to armed struggle for nearly 50 years due to political, ideological, and racial differences.

Similarly, the SLORC has to continue its endeavors with unswerving diligence and constant vigilance to win over Daw Suu Kyi, whose position is an antagonistic one.

It may happen that the snake charmer can accidentally be bitten by the female cobra, the banded krait, or the viper. If the snake charmer is not skilled, one of the three poisonous snakes might escape and bite people.

Therefore, I would like to suggest that the snake charmer's show, which has been on for months, should be ended and the three poisonous snakes be put in the snake charmer's basket.

It is necessary to escape from a state of having a viper in the pouch.

Dear SLORC leaders, "When empires collapse, they do so with a bang, not with a whimper." Let's prevent with brilliant and clear theoretical concept and outlook any reoccurrence of a revolution from below or the kind of disturbances seen in the 8-8-88 general strike.

Burma

14. Recent Military Crackdown

Burma Crackdown

From the **Washington Post**

Monday, September 14, 1998; Page A18

WITH THE ECONOMY deteriorating and its political control slipping, Burma's military regime has responded in the only way it seems to understand -- with more repression. Some 700 members of the National League for Democracy, including 194 elected members of parliament, have been detained in recent months, many in the past week. Some, including an octogenarian, were rousted from their beds. The regime says the democrats were "invited" into custody so the regime could "present the government's view." Even before the latest roundup, three elected members had died in custody, and scores more were being held in often deplorable conditions.

Burma -- or, as the current regime calls it, Myanmar -- is a Southeast Asian nation of 46 million people with great natural wealth and beauty, a strategic location and a tragic modern history. In 1990, its military rulers permitted a parliamentary election, which they lost overwhelmingly to the National League for Democracy. They never have permitted the parliament -- which is Burma's only legitimate government -- to meet.

Just last month a commission of the International Labor Organization concluded after a yearlong study that Burma's regime -- in particular its military -- engages in forced labor on a massive scale. This "gross denial of human rights" involves pressing women and children to walk ahead through suspected minefields, build roads and perform other dangerous and unpaid tasks. Resistance is met with torture, rape, beatings and murder.

At the same time, because of the regime's incompetence and increasing isolation brought about by U.S. economic sanctions, Burma's economy is declining rapidly. The World Bank recently declared the country ineligible for new loans because it has not repaid past ones, a signal to other lenders to steer clear, and is reconsidering a loan to neighboring Thailand for a power plant that would depend on natural gas from Burma.

Students recently staged their largest demonstration in years, despite obvious risks, and Buddhist monks have protested and been arrested. Instead of the dialogue requested by the democrats, the regime responds with more arrests. The United States has spoken out clearly against the regime. Japan and Burma's neighbors in Southeast Asia should likewise make clear that more repression can only increase Burma's isolation.

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Arrests in Burma Mark New Clampdown

(September 8, 1998)-- Human Rights Watch is gravely concerned about the reported arrests in Burma of 220 members of the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD), including 60 elected members of parliament. According to the NLD, the arrest of democracy supporters began in the capital of Rangoon in the late hours of Sunday evening, September 6, and continued through Monday and Tuesday in provincial areas as well. As yet, no charges have been reported against those detained, and the party's leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, has not so far been detained. Human Rights Watch has also received reports that elected members of parliament from smaller ethnic nationality parties have also been detained

The latest round of arrests heralds a major new clampdown by the ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) which could lead to the eventual banning of the NLD altogether. Lt-Gen. Khin Nyunt of the SPDC last month labeled the NLD as "obstructionists with evil intentions".

We urge the Burmese government to comply fully with the recommendations of the United Nations by releasing immediately and unconditionally all those detained for political reasons, and to stop the harassment of the NLD.

Mike Jendrzejczyk
Washington Director of the Asia Division of Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch called on Japan, the European Union and members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), whose foreign ministers are due to meet in New York on September 23-24, to condemn the arrests and urge Burma to take concrete steps as recommended by the U.N. this past April, including "all appropriate measures to allow all citizens to participate freely in the political process...and to permit them to participate in a meaningful process of national reconciliation."

"We urge the Burmese government to comply fully with the recommendations of the United Nations by releasing immediately and unconditionally all those detained for political reasons, and to stop the harassment of the NLD," said Mike Jendrzejczyk, Washington Director of the Asia Division of Human Rights Watch. "Increased repression will only create continued instability and lead to Burma's further isolation internationally."

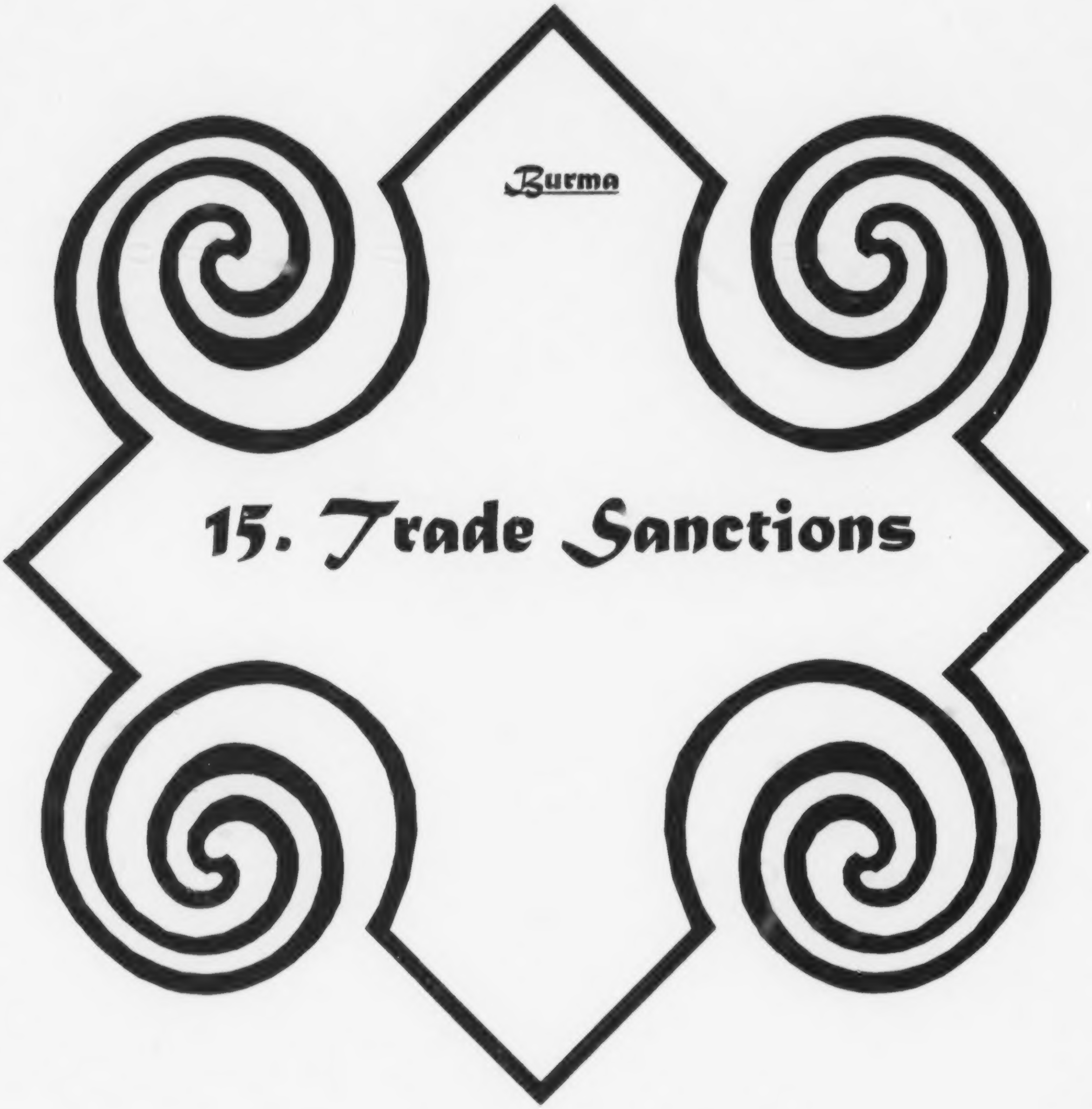
The present crackdown comes at a time of deteriorating conditions within the country. Intermittent student demonstrations in Rangoon have been broken up by riot police over the past two weeks, while tight restrictions on freedom of association and movement are being enforced on NLD officials as well as foreign visitors and journalists. During August, over 20 foreigners were reported to have been deported for their contacts or sympathies with pro-democracy groups within Burma.

However, the trigger for the present arrests appears to have been the NLD's call to convene a "people's parliament" in line with the 1990 election results. An NLD deadline of August 21 for the convening of the parliament was allowed to pass by the military government. But by making such sweeping arrests now, the SPDC is clearly attempting to prevent the NLD and democratic ethnic minority parties from holding any large-scale gatherings.

Just last month the state-controlled media announced several times that the SPDC was willing to talk to the NLD; at the SPDC's invitation, two meetings were held between senior government officials and NLD leaders, including NLD party chairman U Aung Shwe. However, at the month's end, the SPDC appeared to close the door to further meetings, and in particular to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Human Rights Watch is also concerned that a threatening commentary in the state-controlled media today called for her deportation from Burma for "sedition" and representing foreign interests.

Human Rights Watch urged the SPDC to release the 220 who have been arrested as well as all other NLD supporters and ethnic minority politicians who have been detained for their membership of political parties or for peaceful expression of their political beliefs. In addition, the SPDC should lift all restrictions on freedom of association and movement, in particular those which inhibit the functioning of democratic parties. Any attempt by the SPDC to ban the NLD or other democratic parties would represent a serious escalation in the political crisis within Burma. In particular, the threat to deport Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is a grave attack on individual human rights and must immediately be removed.

Human Rights Watch

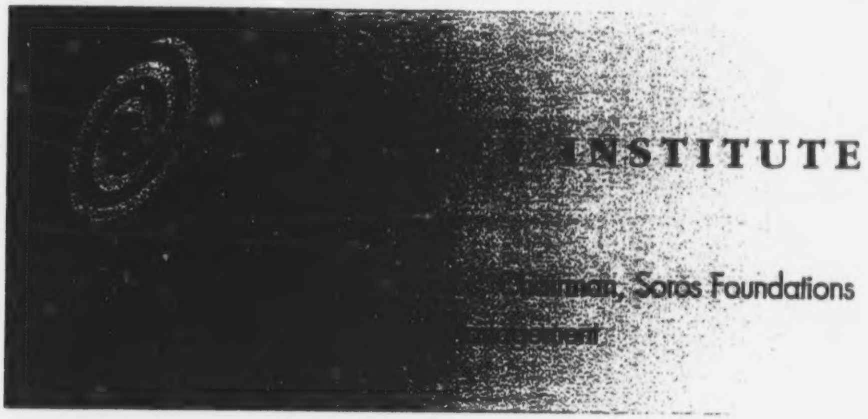


Burma

15. Trade Sanctions

The following testimony was submitted to the
U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
at the May 22, 1996 hearing on Burma.

The hearing focused on The Burma Freedom and Democracy Act [S.1511], which was introduced by Senator Mitch McConnell and co-sponsored by Senators Patrick Moynihan, Alfonse D'Amato and Patrick Leahy.



As a general rule I am not in favor of sanctions. Their purpose is to impose certain universally recognized standards of behavior on recalcitrant governments, but their immediate effect is to isolate the countries concerned even further. Investment sanctions may be useful as a means of applying pressure, but when implemented they are liable to be counter-productive. In the darkness of an isolated closed society all kinds of atrocities can be committed and various forms of repression used that would not be tolerated in an open society.

I am all for constructive engagement — and I have practiced it in many countries. I established the Open Society Fund in 1979 and a foundation in my native country Hungary in 1984. Hungary had at that time a communist government hostile to the concept of open society.

Nevertheless, we managed to find a modus vivendi with the government and the foundation was very successful. I have now a network of foundations covering 24 countries, which include most of the former Soviet Empire, South Africa and Haiti. The foundations support the essential requirements of an open society, especially the freedom of expression and association. I have also established The Burma Project and would be only too happy to set up a foundation inside Burma, or Myanmar as it was renamed by the regime, if only the generals would permit me. As an advocate of open society I would endorse any type of economic sanctions only as a last resort.

But Burma is a case where desperate measures are needed because the situation is so desperate. The people of Burma gave the National League for Democracy, the party led by Aung San Suu Kyi, 60% of the votes and 82% of the seats in the 1990 elections. This mandate is still ignored by those who lost in the polls — the military, the same people who crushed a popular movement for democracy

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two years earlier, killing thousands of civilians in the process. Aung San Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest where she was kept in almost complete isolation for six years.

The whole world condemned the Burmese junta, the repressive regime known as the State Law & Order Restoration Council (SLORC), but slowly the restrictions placed on Burma were relaxed — all in the name of constructive engagement. When Aung San Suu Kyi was finally released last July, we all hoped that this was the beginning of a genuine national reconciliation similar to what happened in South Africa after the release of Nelson Mandela. But what the world considered the beginning of a necessary process, the SLORC apparently considers the end of the concessions it is willing to make.

Human rights conditions have not changed much since she was released. The UN Commission on Human Rights, in its latest resolution, cited the SLORC's continued practice of torture, summary and arbitrary executions, forced labor, including forced portering for the military, and abuse of women, among the litany of offenses against its own citizens.[1]

The SLORC introduced superficial economic reforms that helped justify the relaxation of restrictions by those who wished to engage with the junta. They brought no economic freedom. According to a study just released by Freedom House, Burma still ranks at bottom, along with Iraq and North Korea. In Burma:[2]

- Property rights are non-existent.
- Trade unions and collective bargaining are illegal.
- There are no formal regulations governing business formation, and no guaranteed rights to operate a business.
- The government sets a cap to interest rates.
- The nominal tariffs range from 15 to 300 percent, but a complicated system of application results in an effective tariff of about 10 percent.
- The government dominates the economy, although no accurate figures exist on the number of state-owned enterprises or on the government's share of Gross Domestic Product. Most businesses in the formal sector are owned by the government or by the military officials.

It should be noted that Freedom House's annual survey of political and civil liberties also gave Burma the lowest rating.[3]

Burmese economist Professor Khin Maung Kyi says: "While certain limited sections of the economy enjoy the fruits of the opening, the great majority suffer from low-productivity, inflation and high informal taxation."[4] Burma, with a population of 45 million, has a ratio of expenditures for defense versus health and education of 155%, compared to 5.1% for Indonesia, with its population of 170 million. Professor Khin Maung Kyi views the Burmese army's insistence on dominating the government forever to be "in direct conflict, in terms of both philosophy implied and actions demanded of such an objective, with the tenets and requirements of free market institutions."[5] One of the major impediments to genuine economic reform is a currency that is grossly overvalued by 2,000%. One dollar is worth only six *kyats*, but fetches over 120 *kyats* on the open market. This means that the favored few with access to hard currency get a huge free gift, which is subsidized by the rest of the population.

And the common person has nowhere to turn. Article 19, a well-known London-based organization dedicated to the promotion of free expression, states in a new report that "the manifest unfairness of Burmese laws and the grossly arbitrary manner in which they are applied… often compound the inaccessibility and vagueness of the statutory instruments, and the glaring inconsistencies in unofficial pronouncements concerning the status of certain laws."[6] The law is, in effect, whatever the generals say it is from day to day.

The regime appears to have tightened its grip in recent months. It has arbitrarily extended the sentences of 21 political prisoners who dared to communicate with the outside world about the appalling conditions inside the jails.[7] Just last month, Aung San Suu Kyi reported that the junta appeared intent on crushing Burma's beleaguered democracy movement in every way it can, employing tactics of strong-arm street thugs reminiscent of Nazi leader Hitler's brown shirts.[8]

Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy have spoken out clearly against further foreign investments: "Our policy is that any investment made now is not going to bring any long-term profits for those who are investing, and certainly it is very much against the interests of the people of

Burma because most of the investments coming in are coming in through the same privileged group which is getting richer and richer, and more and more intent upon... clinging to power."[9]

International pressure can make a big difference. Without it Aung San Suu Kyi would not have been released. Now that she has appealed to the international community for further pressure, the international community must respond. If we have any commitment to universal human rights, now is the occasion to show it. In a complex world where most political decisions involve various shades of gray, this is a black and white case:

- It will be argued that free trade promotes free societies. That is a well-sounding slogan without any basis in fact. Regimes may remain repressive even as they grow rich. After all, China and Singapore have not become havens of human rights.
- Sanctions are said to hurt the population, but in Burma, the people are already as downtrodden as they could be. Sanctions would hit almost exclusively the governing elite.
- Sanctions are said to hurt U.S. business interests, but at the moment the amount of American investment in Burma is relatively insignificant, so we can still afford to live up to our moral principles. More investment does not necessarily mean more leverage. On the contrary, special interests often take precedence over general principles.

Sanctions have been successful elsewhere. South Africa is the best known example. Sanctions have also worked in Poland and Chile, where we tied certain benefits directly to the removal of specific rights abuses. International solidarity is extremely important in making sanctions effective, but absent that, a firm stand by America would send a strong moral and political message which is likely to be heeded.

Europe is paying more attention to Burma too. The European Commission, reacting to charges of forced labor practices in Burma filed by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), has begun an investigation that threatens Burma's Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) on its exports into countries belonging to the European Union.[10]

Japan and the countries of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) ought to be reminded of their role as neighbors of Burma, and this Bill will do so. Japan, in particular, has special historic links to Burma. On the one hand, Burma's independence heroes, including General Aung San, the father of Aung San Suu Kyi, were trained by Japan. On the other hand, the current Burmese army, under the rule of the SLORC, seem to be imitating some of the worst features of the Japanese in the Second World War.

Japan today is a major economic power in the world — and also a leader of constructive engagement with Burma. It must take responsibility for its actions, especially if these actions are prolonging the suffering of millions of Burmese who are denied fundamental freedoms.

Is Burma the new South Africa — as claimed by the groundswell of young activists and supporters of a democratic Burma all around the world? Morally, yes. The main difference is that the blacks of South Africa had a large constituency sympathetic to them in the United States, while Burma does not have such a local constituency. Only the principles of human rights are involved in Burma. It is all the more important, therefore, that we respond. We can start by supporting this Bill.

NOTES

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1. United Nations Commission on Human Rights, "Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar," E/CN.4/1996/l.91, Geneva, 22 April, 1996
2. *World Survey of Economic Freedom*. New York, Freedom House: 1995-96, p. 138-139
3. *Freedom in the World: The Annual Survey of Political Rights & Civil Liberties*. New York: Freedom House, 1995-96, p. 163-165
4. Khin Maung Kyi, "Burmese Gleam — Will It Endure and Glow or Flicker and Die: A Prognosis of Recent Economic Changes in Burma", unpublished paper given at Open Society Institute seminar on Burma, October 5, 1995, p. 11
5. Khin Maung Kyi, p. 15
6. Forthcoming report on Burmese law by K. Venkateswaran, Article 19, London.
7. Amnesty International/USA, Urgent Action Appeal, April 2, 1996
8. UPI, via Burmanet, "Suu Kyi Compares Burmese Group to Nazis," April 21
9. BBC Monitoring Service, May 10, 1996
10. "Forced Labor in the Union of Myanmar," European Commission press release, Brussels, Belgium, 15 February 1996

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UNOC [illegible]

Testimony of John F. Imle, Jr. [illegible]

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman, I am John Imle, President of Unocal Corporation. Unocal is a global diversified energy corporation headquartered in Los Angeles, California.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify today.

Our interest in this hearing stems from our involvement in a partnership to develop the Yadana natural gas field offshore Myanmar — formerly known by its colonial name, Burma — and from our long history in developing countries in Asia.

UNOCAL'S POSITION ON S.1511

Unocal opposes the passage of S.1511. We believe the approach outlined in S.1511 is counterproductive to its intent.

Rather than isolating Myanmar, the expanding use of unilateral steps will further isolate the United States from many of its allies in Asia and Europe — all of whom are aggressively developing closer relationships with Myanmar.

WHY IS UNOCAL IN MYANMAR?

By the very nature of our business, energy companies must go to the resource.

Unlike oil, natural gas cannot be transported over great distances. A natural gas development project must have all related production and transportation facilities located within a reasonable distance to a hard currency energy market with sufficient demand for that gas.

Thus, geology and geography — not geopolitics — are our dictates. Other industries have the luxury of locating wherever it is the most convenient, expedient or cheapest. No international energy resource company has that luxury.

These factors also play a key role in determining how we develop the Yadana field. A world-class energy resource located 43 miles offshore Myanmar, the field has reserves of more than 5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

Unocal joined this project in 1993 and has a 28.26 percent interest. The lead partner and project operator is Paris-based Total, which won the bid for the field in 1992 and which holds a 31.24 percent share. The other partners in the Yadana project are Thailand's PTTEP [Petroleum Authority of Thailand Exploration and Production], which holds a 25.5 percent share, and MOGE [Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise], Myanmar's oil and gas company, which holds a 15 percent interest.

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Much of the gas will be transported approximately 416 miles by pipeline from the offshore Yadana field to Thailand where it will fuel an electricity generating plant to be constructed at Ratchaburi, southwest of Bangkok. Demand for electricity in Thailand is soaring and expected to double over the next 15 years. Thailand has a strong economy and sufficient resources to purchase the gas.

The Yadana project also makes feasible power and fertilizer plants to be built near the capital city of Yangon, as well as a possible second electricity generating plant in southern Myanmar.

Let me make one point very clear: this project will go forward with or without the active involvement of Unocal or any other American company. It involves the development of a known, abundant natural gas field, using off-the-shelf technology, and serving a market with rapidly expanding demand. There are no technological or economic hurdles to developing the Yadana field.

If this legislation is enacted and we are forced out, the current partnership will either purchase our share or other foreign partner will be recruited immediately. I also want to add that as a direct result of discussions about bans on U.S. private investment in Myanmar, I have been approached by a leading Asian corporation about possibly purchasing Unocal's share in this project.

Our position is that it would be irresponsible — for us, our stockholders, our employees and, for that matter, the people of Myanmar — for Unocal to divest our interest. Here's why: the project is being conducted in an ethical and responsible manner, it is a key part of our Southeast Asia business strategy, and it will bring numerous infrastructure development and socio-economic benefits to Myanmar and Thailand.

WHO BENEFITS FROM OUR PRESENCE?

The people of Myanmar will receive the main benefits of our involvement in the Yadana project.

In a very poor nation desperately short of energy supplies, the project will make feasible plants currently under evaluation for construction near Yangon.

Myanmar's agricultural sector must now import — at a significant cost — most of the fertilizers used in its agricultural production. This dependency will be lessened with the proposed construction of a 1750-metric-ton-per-day fertilizer plant near the capital city.

Of importance are the socio-economic development benefits the project is bringing to the 20,000 villagers living in the vicinity of the 39-mile-long pipeline route. They will directly benefit from the project in two important ways:

- The project offers immediate employment opportunities for all ethnic communities in this region. Our employment practices ensure that the wage scales for these jobs are superior to prevailing local average wage scales and that employees are provided a safe and healthful work environment.
- The partners are underwriting a wide range of socio-economic development programs that are developing a private sector in the region and significantly improving local standards of living. We're building new or renovating existing schools, hospitals and health centers. And we've launched a major malaria research and prevention program under the direction of the Pasteur Institute.

These investments — as well as all costs — in the project are shared pro rata by the partners. Capital costs for the project — which extends only up to the Thai border — are estimated at $1 billion. No significant income is expected to be generated until the year 2000, and it will be another three years — the year 2003 — before the partners expect to recover their original investments.

The full project as well as its socio-economic development programs are described in detail in the report and photographs attached to my testimony. I ask consent, Mr. Chairman, that these documents be made part of the hearing record.

The people of Thailand will also benefit from this project. The clean-burning natural gas transported to Ratchaburi will generate up to 2,800 megawatts of electricity. This represents almost 10 percent of Thailand's increased energy demand.

HOW CAN SUBSTANTIVE LONG-LASTING CHANGE BE ACHIEVED?

Based on Unocal's 30-year history of doing business in Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia, we believe that long-term and consistent engagement in Myanmar will bring about change similar to that

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which occurred in those countries.

U.S. corporations can and should play a role in helping shape the economic development of Myanmar by setting a leadership example. We can achieve this by following specific business practices and codes of conduct and ensuring that our operations comply fully with those standards.

Unocal is a publicly held corporation, accountable to our Board and our stockholders. Our written code of conduct for doing business internationally expresses clearly our commitment to treating everyone working on any of our projects with fairness and respect. We have established a comprehensive system of safeguards and compliance practices to ensure that every aspect of the Yadana project complies fully with our code of conduct.

Unocal's code of conduct and Yadana project-specific codes and policies are included in the appendix of the report submitted with my written remarks.

We can promote constructive and positive change by demonstrating that strict attention to health and safety standards, environmental compliance and responsible labor practices are good for this project, good for attracting capital for future projects, and good for the long-term development of Myanmar.

Since joining the project in 1993, we have conducted six in-depth, first-hand field evaluations, most recently in January 1996. I have been there several times as well. In addition to these on-the-ground reviews, ongoing map research and aerial photography confirm that the Yadana project is complying fully with our corporate code of conduct. Our Board of Directors regularly reviews the progress of the Yadana project and annually reports on compliance issues to our shareholders.

S.1511 would eliminate any positive presence that U.S. corporations might have in Myanmar. Section 4(b)(1) would ban U.S. private investment in Myanmar, requiring U.S. companies to disengage. We strongly oppose this section, and believe it will be counter-productive to promoting substantive, long-term change and encouraging economic progress in Myanmar.

The additional unilateral steps outlined in S.1511 will render the United States irrelevant in Myanmar's development and marginal in Southeast Asia. None of Myanmar's major trading partners in Asia or in Europe is considering a similar course of action, and none is likely to follow the U.S. lead. In fact, the seven nations of ASEAN in July, 1995

S.1511 would eliminate any positive presence that U.S. corporations might have in Myanmar. Section 4(b)(1) would ban U.S. private investment in Myanmar, requiring U.S. companies to disengage. We strongly oppose this section, and believe it will be counter-productive to promoting substantive, long-term change and encouraging economic progress in Myanmar.

took the first formal step in forging even closer relationships with Myanmar by its signing ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.

A number of provisions outlined in S.1511 will put the United States in direct confrontation with our friends and allies in the region. I am not a foreign policy expert, Mr. Chairman. However, having recently visited a number of Southeast Asia countries, I've heard a constant and growing concern about the current direction of U.S. policy toward Myanmar. Our friends in these countries seriously believe that the current U.S. policy of isolation and non-engagement will be intensified, and may, in fact, weaken U.S.-ASEAN relations as ASEAN cross-border trade and engagement with Myanmar increases.

The nations of Southeast Asia adopted a policy of constructive engagement for a number of reasons. There is concern about Chinese economic dominance in the region. Division and confrontation pose serious and significant dangers, especially for neighbors sharing common borders. These nations know that the politics of confrontation have created more problems than it has solved. They are unlikely to change their policy of engagement. The ASEAN nations are keenly aware that isolating Myanmar holds a very real danger of forcing Myanmar squarely into the camp of its northern neighbor.

I, too, am concerned about official U.S. policy of isolation and non-engagement.

Since September,1988, the United States has unilaterally suspended all economic assistance to Myanmar and withdrawn GSP privileges. The decertification of Myanmar as a narcotics cooperating country in 1989 has, by law, required the U.S. Executive Directors at all multinational financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank to vote against projects in Myanmar. Neither Eximbank nor OPIC have programs in Myanmar. And, since 1991, the U.S. diplomatic presence in Myanmar has been downgraded from Ambassador to the consular level.

Mr. Chairman, I am fully aware of the challenges facing Myanmar, but none of these unilateral steps has forced the changes in Myanmar that this bill would demand.

Nor, I submit, would the further steps in S.1511. Instead, the bill would further marginalize U.S. influence. The only people hurt by S.1511 will be the ordinary citizens of Myanmar who otherwise might benefit from the humanitarian projects and technical assistance previously carried out by U.S. bilateral assistance agencies.

Steps outlined in S.1511 cannot have any measurable positive impact because we have minimal economic and political leverage. U.S. investment in Myanmar is less than 10 percent of all foreign investment and can — and will — be easily replaced. By codyifing current sanctions, Congress will leave this Administration — and any future administration — with no flexibility to respond to or encourage changes in Myanmar.

The only result of S.1511 will be to isolate ourselves, not the government of Myanmar. S.1511 will make it more difficult for the U.S. to be an active player in Asia during the next century. The United States runs the very real risk of becoming irrelevant.

A review of U.S. actions shows clearly that the U.S. has not implemented a policy that even remotely resembles constructive engagement.

If we continue traveling down the path of unilateral sanctions, we will be unable to lead by example not only in Myanmar but throughout the region. We will diminish our ability to influence constructively the future of Southeast Asia and cede the opportunity to participate in the formative stages of Myanmar's development. We also will have compromised, hypocritically in my assessment, our commitment to improving the lives of others.

We are proud of the Yadana project because it does what current government policy fails to do: improve the lives of others. It is an outstanding model of responsible economic development that can make a difference to the people of Myanmar and Thailand. For the first time in many villagers' lives, our project brings hope and the chance of a better way of life.

As Myanmar opens up its economy to the West, it is time for us to lead by example. It is not the time to slam the door shut.

To those who ask how we can we remain in Myanmar, we respond, "How can we ever justify leaving?"

Thank you.

Chapter 3
HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN THE GAS PIPELINE REGION

In the thirty-four years that SLORC and its predecessor, the BSPP, have ruled Burma, government policy and military strategy have created a climate in which gross human rights violations are tolerated and often officially sanctioned. While most of the human rights violations committed by SLORC were also common under the BSPP, SLORC's recent drives to bring the entire population under its authority have led to a noticeable increase in the severity and geographic extent of the abuses. Systematic violations of human rights by SLORC continue to grow as the army consolidates its power base in new regions. It is thus inevitable that new forms of repression have also arisen as SLORC has sought to gain control and quell opposition in areas where foreign investment is concentrated.

The UN Special Rapporteur for Burma, Yozo Yokota, reporting on human rights conditions in February 1995, emphasized the link between human rights abuses and foreign investment. He stated that "*forced labor, forced relocation, arbitrary killings, beatings, rapes and confiscation of property by the SLORC are most commonly occurring in the border areas where the Army is engaged in military operations or **regional development projects**.*"[1]

Since SLORC began to mobilize military forces in the pipeline region, human rights abuses have increased. Virtually all victims of human rights violations in Burma have no recourse under SLORC law, as dissent in Burma is systematically and brutally stifled. Human rights abuses that occur in the country often remain unreported, since independent observers are not allowed official access to any part of Burma. Moreover, the pervasive climate of fear keeps most people silent even in the face of the most appalling violations. Both ERI and SAIN, however, have extensive contacts living and working inside the country, including in the pipeline region itself, and are thus able to document the continuing abuses associated with the project.

Unocal has argued that its presence in Burma gives the company unique insight into the human rights situation within the country, claiming that: "*[a]s a rule, human rights groups do not have direct access to on-scene information in Myanmar. We do.*"[2] Despite its access as well as its proximity to the area in question, Unocal has categorically denied that human rights abuses are occurring in the project area.[3] In a meeting with human rights activists, Unocal president John Imle stated, *"We will not allow those [human rights] violations to take place to our benefit, meaning on our project."*[4] Unocal's partner, Total, has also claimed that their company:

> *is pledged to ensuring that the construction and operation of the Yadana pipeline is approached and managed in a manner which is consistent with the local communities' expectations, traditions and requirements . . . [and] in line with the policy of established international guidelines . . .*[5]

In spite of these and other claims, Total representatives are unsure of their ability to control the security forces which the company has hired to protect the project. Company officials have openly admitted that they *"do not share Unocal's confidence in the good conduct of Burmese troops."*[6] Such misgivings, however, have not led either company to reconsider its business relationship with these troops or the regime which commands them.

In contrast to company claims, reports by international organizations and human rights groups have linked escalating human rights abuses, poverty and refugee flow to oil and gas activities in Burma.[7] ERI and SAIN sources within the country have verified that the scale of human rights violations against civilians in the pipeline region has dramatically increased since natural gas investment activities began. Likewise, a growing number of recent arrivals in refugee camps have left their homes in the pipeline region because of the high level of army activity and associated human rights abuses in the area. ERI and SAIN have received this information from reliable sources who independently confirmed these serious allegations in their entirety. Most of the names of people and places, however, have been withheld in order to protect the individuals and their families.

The abuses described below result from the increased security presence in the pipeline area. ERI and SAIN allege that because these security personnel are in the region specifically to protect the pipeline, the oil companies must bear their share of responsibility for the human rights violations committed by them. The elevated level of persecution is directly linked to their investments, even if the companies, or the investments, do not directly benefit from these abuses.

The ensuing chapters on forced labor (Chapter 4) and forced relocation of villages (Chapter 5) provide evidence of a further category of violations, in which investment activities do benefit directly from human rights violations. What follows is only a representative sample of incidents that illustrate the relationship of energy company involvement to virtually every aspect of civilian life in the pipeline region. This primary source information is presented in the form of direct testimony from the victims and witnesses, excerpted from interviews conducted in recent months. ERI and SAIN feel that it is crucial to allow these persons, denied free speech in Burma, a forum in which their stories can be truthfully presented.

Violations of the Right to Life

Article 3 of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that, "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person."[8] The right to life is perhaps the most fundamental of all human rights, protected by international law as well as the domestic laws of virtually all nations. Under international law, the right to life is one of the few nonderogable rights: even in a declared state of emergency, a government may never violate its citizens' right to life. In spite of this universal prohibition, SLORC consistently and blatantly violates this right throughout Burma, including in the pipeline region.

Violations of the right to life and of the integrity of the person have taken the form of summary executions by the army, such as those conducted in retaliation for the February 1996 attack on Total's headquarters in Ohn Bin Gwin. As part of this retaliation, SLORC arbitrarily executed at least ten Karen villagers from Ein Da Ya Za Village which is located on the pipeline route.

None of these people were ever charged with any crime or offense. Likewise, not one received a trial, a hearing or even an informal opportunity to defend him or herself before being executed (see Chapter 2: Security).

Arbitrary killings are carried out by military leaders as well as soldiers from the rank and file. Villagers are routinely killed or physically abused if they are suspected to be linked to armed rebel groups such as the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) or the Mon National Liberation Army (MNLA). A sixty-six-year-old Karen man from Mi Chuang Laung, a village located on the pipeline route, related a typical occurrence. He described how SLORC soldiers killed two men, Saw Nlaw Mae and Ta Lay Lay, in November 1992, after accusing them of supporting the KNLA in the pipeline region. *"It's so scary, I know these two men very well. I know there was nothing to that* [the accusations]," he told ERI. *"They did not do anything, they are just farmers. SLORC arrested and killed them on their farms."*[9]

SLORC has also killed numerous civilian laborers and porters in the pipeline region when they have either failed to carry their loads or attempted to escape (see Chapter 5: Forced Labor). Such deaths rise to the level of extrajudicial execution, and they are often preceded by torture, rape or severe mistreatment at the hands of SLORC security forces. In addition, numerous deaths have resulted from the denial of adequate food and medical care to those conscripted to work as forced laborers and porters for the military.

The UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions has expressed concern about such killings in Burma, pointing specifically to cases of Mon and Karen people who were reportedly killed by the army. The Special Rapporteur noted the *"persistent reports of arbitrary and excessive use of force by members of the security forces, who seem to enjoy virtual impunity."*[10] A young woman from Ye Byu Township voiced these concerns as she related her personal experience on the Ye-Tavoy railway:

> *They just walked around and beat the people who rested . . . . They never let anyone rest when they were working. Especially prisoners, they are treated the worst. They beat them to death. They said one prisoner died of diarrhea. But it was obviously a beating. I saw two dead bodies with blood all over the bodies.*
>
> *When I saw the two dead bodies, one of them hadn't died. We saw the blood from his head and the vomit. The battalion commander named Aung Min beat one prisoner to death. Some prisoners were killed by diarrhea, and some were beaten to death. The total is around 30 because they did not bury them so deeply, and so when the tide came, the water washed the bodies ashore. We saw so many skulls and some children were playing with the skulls and bones.*[11]

SAIN has verified that political prisoners are forced to do hard labor on development projects throughout the country, often as part of chain gangs. For example, SAIN has recently received confirmation from reliable sources within Kachin State that SLORC is using political prisoners to work on infrastructure projects such as new roads and airports there.[12] SLORC may also be using such political prisoners to work on infrastructure projects for the gas pipeline venture. It is therefore possible that some deaths from forced labor in the pipeline region are political killings.

AFL-CIO leadership calls for implementation of sanctions against Burma's military regime

For Immediate Release contact Joe Drexler or Rod Roger
February 19, 1997 from Soros Foundation Burma Project

President of Energy Workers' Union Introduces Resolution

The Executive Council of the 13.9 million member AFL-CIO today passed a resolution introduced by the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union (OCAW) condemning the current military government in Burma and urging "the Clinton Administration to implement economic sanctions without further delay in accordance with the law."

"We hope that we have stuck another nail in the military's regime's coffin with this resolution which expresses the leadership sentiment representing millions of U.S. workers," said Robert Wages, OCAW President, who sponsored the resolution. "Maybe now the Clinton Administration will do what Congress intended it to do and quite making excuses for refusing to impose these sanctions," he added.

Wages commented further that continued and increasing repression in Burma provides clear evidence that the conditions granted by Congress to the President to impose sanctions have been met.

The resolution also call on U.S. corporations to withdraw their investment in Burma and encourages unions to mobilize members to pressure the Clinton administration and Congress to take whatever steps necessary to restore democracy and civilian rule in Burma.

In addition, the resolution encourages unions to support selective purchasing legislation barring the expenditure of public funds with companies which do business in Burma. Selective purchasing laws have been passed in nine cities, one country and one state.

Unocal, Arco and Texaco* are singled out in the resolution for special scorn by the labor body for "providing it the (military regime) with large amounts of desperately needed hard currency" at the same time oil companies are engaged "in severe downsizing and cost-cutting which has compromised worker and community safety and is resulting in significant loss of high-skill, high-wage jobs in the United States."

Also receiving special attention is the production and sale of heroin, which is attributed to being the military regime's largest source of capital beyond that provided by the oil companies, and widespread use of forced labor.

We're soon going to find out whose side the Clinton Administration is really on--the oil companies and drug dealers or the workers." said Wages.

According to Wages, OCAW is planning a "Three Days for Burma" campaign to take place sometime in the Spring in which the 90,000 member union will be fully mobilized throughout the country to enlist union members to exert pressure on the Clinton Administration and Congress to take whatever steps are necessary to restore democracy and civilian rule in Burma.

AFL-CIO Executive Council Statement

Burma

When the omnibus appropriations bill was signed into law last September by President Clinton, a clear line was drawn defining a new course for U.S. policy toward Burma. Sanctions will be invoked if conditions in Burma deteriorate and the military regime which goes by the acronym SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) has "physically harmed, rearrested for political acts, or exiled Aung San Suu Kyi or has committed large-scale repression of violence against the democratic opposition."

Since the bill was signed into law, the situation has gone from bad to worse. Hundreds of opposition leader and activists have been arrested and Aung San Suu Kyi remains virtually imprisoned in her own home and subjected to increasingly severe forms of harassment. Freedom of association is absolutely denied. There are no independent unions in Burma, and all attempts to organize them are brutally suppressed. Only within the past three weeks, SLORC has mounted a new military offensive against the Karen, one of Burma's ethnic minorities, resulting in thousands of new refugees. Refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border have been attacked and burned.

Furthermore, if anything, the widespread and systematic use of forced labor by the SLORC to rebuild the country's decrepit infrastructure has increased during the past year as SLORC has promoted tourism in a desperate attempt to attract hard currency. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions has estimated that 800,000 men, women and children have been utilized as forced laborers, many in connection with the construction of an overland gas pipeline by SLORC which is in joint venture with Unocal and its French partner Total.

So great have been the abuses that SLORC has been singled out by the International Labor Organization, the UN Commission on Human Rights, the European Union, and the US Congress as one of the world's most notorious human rights violators. The growing international consensus to isolate Burma has led to the withdrawal of European companies such as Heineken and Carlsberg. Earlier, under pressure from campus and consumer activists, such U.S. companies as Levi-Strauss, Eddie Bauer and Liz Claiborne pulled out all production out of Burma. Recently, PepsiCo announced that is severing all commercial ties to Burma.

Recognizing that foreign investment contributes directly to the strengthening of the military regime and the continued repression of civilians, Aung San Suu Kyi has repeatedly called on international business to suspend investment until the country is democratic. U.S. corporations that continue to do business in Burma cannot deny their complicity in keeping the regime in power. This is especially true for U.S. based oil companies which stubbornly continue to prop up the military regime by providing it with large amounts of desperately needed hard currency. In addition to Unocal, ARCO and Texaco* are engaged in exploration that may provide SLORC with significant additional capital. This is occurring at the same time that oil companies are engaged in severe downsizing and cost-cutting which has compromised worker and community safety and is resulting in a significant loss of high-skill, high-wage jobs in the United States.

Beyond revenues provided by major oil companies, the production and sale of heroin is SLORC's largest source of capital. Under SLORC, Burma has become the largest source supplier of heroin in the world and 60 percent of the heroin seized in the United States comes from Burma. There is a growing body of evidence that the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise, Unocal's partner in Burma is serving as a front for drug money laundering.

The AFL-CIO urges the Clinton Administration to implement economic sanctions without further delay in accordance with the law. We call on all U.S. corporations still doing business in Burma, to withdraw all investment, licenses, franchises, contracts, goods and services. We encourage our unions to actively support selective purchasing legislation at the local, state and federal levels which bans contracts or the expenditure of public funds with companies that do business in Burma. And finally, we encourage our unions to mobilize members to exert the necessary political pressure on the Clinton Administration and Congress to take whatever steps necessary to restore democracy and civilian rule in Burma.

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*Texaco and ARCO pulled out of Burma in the spring of 1998.

International Herald Tribune
Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Do Sanctions Really Work? Debate Is On In Burma

By Thomas Crampton

RANGOON - Burma's economy, squeezed for years by Western sanctions and weakened by the economic crisis affecting much of Asia, is in tatters.

Now, the ills afflicting Burma have in the last few months led the clique of generals who rule the country to acknowledge, uncharacteristically, that there are problems: the Burmese currency, the kyat, has plunged; inflation is rising; and investment has declined.

This new openness in turn, has led some supporters of sanctions to question their continued usefulness.

"The economy is getting worse but the government is not shaky and it won't topple," said Ma Thanegi, a former member of the opposition National League for Democracy who was once an aide to the opposition leader and Nobel laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. "Boycotts and sanctions will not work."

Since the military regime took over in 1988 and ignored the results of a 1990 election won by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, Western governments have introduced a range of sanctions to pressure Rangoon into suppressing drug trafficking and making democratic reforms.

The country has lost access to most foreign aid. The European Union and the United States canceled the preferential tariffs often accorded developing nations. And last year, a U.S. ban on American countries making new investments in Burma went into effect.

Ma Thanegi, who like many league members in 1989 was sent to prison for a time, argues that such sanctions may end up impeding change. "If there were no sanctions, responsible companies could come in with their financial clout and knowledge to change things," she said in an interview. "You have to be realistic. With the government now looking for ways out of this crisis, it is exactly the time they need good advice and expertise."

But the executive committee of the National League for Democracy still supports sanctions unanimously, said U Tin Oo, the party's deputy chairman.

"If investment comes in, all the wealth will go to the generals," said U Tin Oo. "The majority of Burmese people are farmers, so they are not affected by sanctions."

Because of her change of heart, Ma Thanegi has been called a turncoat to the party she still supports, but among activists in Burma she is not alone.

"Sanctions are keeping out opportunity," said a former student activist in Rangoon who now works for an international corporation and spoke on condition of anonymity.

"Foreign investment brings contacts with the outside world, ideas and it can also be quite subversive," she said.

"The office of every Western business uses a fax machine and e-mail," she said. These can be "powerful tools" in a country where the state strictly controls communications.

Ronald Morris, general manager of Britain's Premier Oil PLC, a major shareholder in Burma's Yetagun gas pipeline project, echoed that, saying, "International corporations bring the technology and value systems of their home countries."

More than just building pipelines, Mr. Morris said, "We import into developing countries state-of-the-art communications technology along with a microculture of the democratic and free society we come from."

To hear the Burmese government tell it, the U.S. ban on investment has backfired. "The adverse effects are being felt more by the United States, because we have lots of raw material and are rich with natural resources," a cabinet minister, Brigadier General Maung Maung, said in an interview.

Unlike South Africa, which lost precious foreign investment to sanctions, Burma had only just begun to emerge from decades of when sanctions began to be imposed.

For more than two decades until 1988, the dictatorship of General Ne Win led the country along the Burmese path to socialism, a xenophobic nationalism that severed most ties to the outside world.

Once the world's largest rice exporter, Burma had enough fertile land to feed itself without any trade and the government made it clear that foreign ideas were unwelcome.

Since the 1990 election, the politics of Burma have frozen: The National League for Democracy insists it should rule Burma, while the military government continues to consolidate its control over the country.

Political change will come, the generals insist, once economic growth takes place. The National League for Democracy, in contrast, says growth should occur only after political change.

"Unless we resolve the problems of the 1990 elections nobody should invest their money here and nobody should come as a tourist," said U Tin Oo. "Sanctions should stay in place and there should be no economic development until the political issues are solved."

It is hard to measure the direct economic impact of the U.S. investment ban. Apart from some natural gas ventures and a few high-profile manufacturers, the country had not attracted many U.S. businesses. For one thing, Burma's consumers earn on average less than $300 per year and pay with a currency that is not easily convertible.

More damaging to the economy than the actual sanctions, analysts say, are parallel efforts, such as laws that several American cities and Massachusetts have passed barring purchases from companies doing business in Burma.

Massachusetts, for instance, recently sent letters warning companies in Rangoon that they cannot bid for state contracts.

Fear that such letters are a precursor to protests has prompted European and American companies to withdraw or to conceal their presence here.

In the months before the United States passed its investment ban, investment in Burma originating from offshore corporate havens like the British Virgin Islands soared, and obscure appellations replaced familiar company names.

Many businesses operating in Burma have scaled back operations to minimize publicity.

"There used to be a ritual photograph with ministers and businessmen in The New Light of Myanmar newspaper whenever a deal was struck," one diplomat in Rangoon said. "Now fear of retribution from activists has forced people to hide what they are doing here. It makes it much harder to figure out what is really going on here."

For all the anxiety the activists create, the strongest brakes now being applied to Burma's economy come from the economic crisis in East Asia.

About half of Burma's foreign investment and trade come from its Southeast Asian neighbors, which have seen the value of their currencies against the U.S. dollar plummet since July. The plunges have meant that Southeast Asian companies that had opened branches here have had to pull out.

Burma

16. Letters to the Editor
~ Letters to Political Representatives
~ Classroom Activities

SAMPLE LETTER

Here is a sample letter your class can use as a reference in writing your own letter to companies such as Unocal and Total expressing why you think they should withdraw from Burma.

Dear ________________,

This letter concerns your investment in Burma. There are good reasons why the United States has banned new investment in Burma. Foreign investment in Burma does not help those who need economic help the most. Rather, foreign investment directly or indirectly ends up in the hands of the SPDC, Burma's military regime. This government does not try to meet the economic and social needs of its citizens but instead infringes on their human rights.

Your investment in Burma finances government and military policies which include using forced labor and porters, manufacturing and selling heroine, and oppressing and relocating minority groups. SPDC's policy also includes imprisoning, torturing and killing members of Burma's democratic movement. This is not constructive engagement; this is a case of financing the policies of an evil and illegitimate military regime.

I urge you to join companies such as Levi-Strauss, Eddie Bauer, Liz Claiborne, Arco and Pepsi in pulling out of Burma. Currently, I am part of a large number of customers who refuse to buy your products until you end operations in Burma and democracy is restored. We support Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League of Democracy and recognize them as the legitimate winners of Burma's 1990 political elections, even though the current regime has refused to recognize the results and currently rules by sheer military power and installing fear into the Burmese people.

I understand that the current U.S. sanctions ban only new investment in Burma and therefore do not include your operations. However, I appeal to your conscience and sense of proper business conduct to stop supporting slave labor, minority oppression, production of illegal drugs, and unconstitutional imprisonment of democracy advocates in Burma.

Sincerely,

(Your name here)

SEND LETTERS TO:

Monsieur Thierry Desmarest
President et Directeur General, Total S.A.--
Total, 24 cours Michelet
92800 Puteaux France

Roger Beach, CEO
Unocal Corporations
2141 Rosecrans Blvd., Suite 4000
El Segundo, CA 90245
Tel: (310) 726-7600

The Investors in Terror: Companies STILL doing business in Burma

Procter & Gamble
Caterpillar
InterDigital
Total
UNOCAL
ABN
Northern Telecom Premiere Oil (UK)
Mitsubishi
Marubeni
Sony
Fujitsu

Companies which have pulled out of Burma:

Ericsson PULLED OUT OF BURMA Sept. 2, 1998
ARCO PULLED OUT OF BURMA August 11, 1998
Compaq Computers PULLED OUT OF BURMA Summer, 1998
Royal Brunei Airlines PULLED OUT OF BURMA Oct. 25, 1997
Texaco PULLED OUT OF BURMA Sept. 24, 1997
Heineken PULLED OUT OF BURMA July 10, 1996
PepsiCo PULLED OUT OF BURMA Jan. 24, 1997
Motorola PULLED OUT OF BURMA Nov. 25, 1996
Levi-Strauss
Eddie Bauer
Liz Claiborne
Seagrams
Macy's
Oracle Corp.
Columbia Sportswear
Amoco
Reebok
Petro-Canada
Smith & Hawken
Carlsberg
Hewlett-Packard
Eastman Kodak
Walt Disney
Phillips Electronics
Apple Computers
Anheuser-Busch

LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

I Debates

The "hot issues" in Burma are very controversial. There are many sides to every story. Students must learn to sort facts and weigh opinions in order to reach well-reasoned conclusions. Two examples of these "hot issues" are presented in this resource book. We have purposely included two sides of the story concerning *trade sanctions against Burma vs. constructive engagement* and *legitimacy of the ruling regime vs. legitimacy of the NLD*. By examining articles presented in these sections, students can draw conclusions as to what side they are on by considering where and who the information came from and what is behind the story.

A) Trade sanctions against Burma vs. Constructive engagement

Both sides of this debate are presented in chapter 15, Trade Sanctions pro/con.

1. Read "Do Sanctions Really Work? Debate is on in Burma" by Thomas Crampton together as a class. (The teacher should be prepared to explain any unfamiliar vocabulary or concepts.) This article will help the students to get a general idea of what both sides of the debate think about sanctions.
2. Divide class into two groups, one to prepare and debate in favor of sanctions, and one to prepare and debate against sanctions and in favor of constructive engagement.
3. Examples of arguments in favor of sanctions
    - Investment in Burma only gives the illegitimate ruling regime financial stability to initiate their oppressive policies. Removing these investments will leave the regime with no money to fight the democratic movements in that country.
    - Any country with such a horrible human rights record, environmental record, and record of totalitarianism should be isolated from the international community until they reform.
    - Economic sanctions in Burma don't take jobs and opportunities away from the poor because the benefits from foreign investment are only enjoyed by government officials and the elite classes.
    - Students should be able to come up with more arguments in their readings
4. Examples of arguments against sanctions and in favor of constructive engagement:
    - By imposing sanctions, those countries give up any influence they may have in Burma while competing countries like China gain influence.
    - Sanctions against Burma deprive the Burmese government of a source of income and forces them to resort to slave labor and heroin sales for income.
    - Investment in Burma creates jobs and opportunities and better working and living conditions for common workers in Burma.
    - If companies are not permitted by their government to invest in Burma, competing companies whose countries have no sanctions will benefit from these investments instead.
    - Students should be able to come up with more arguments in their readings.
5. It is important for the teacher to act as a monitor during this activity
6. At the end of the exercise, students should discuss the current situation in Burma and what the strengths and weaknesses are in each argument.

B) Support the current government vs. support the NLD
We realize that this booklet is critical of the ruling Burmese regime, however, in chapter 13, SLORC/NPLC Defends Itself, an alternative view is presented from an article published in Burma's national government-controlled newspaper.

1. Read "When will the Snake Charming Act End?" by U Than Maung as a class. (The teacher should be prepared to explain any unfamiliar vocabulary or concepts.) This article allows the government to present its case and is critical of NLD and Aung San Suu Kyi.

2. In answering the following questions, students should read pertinent articles in this resource book, cite them in their answers and be prepared to state why they take a certain position.
   a) Do you agree/disagree with the author's claim that the anti-government movement is made up of radicals, extremists and anarchists who want to overthrow the current Burmese government for their own interests?

   b) To what extent do you agree with the author's claim that the current military leaders have "disbanded the one-party system, scrapped the socialist economy, sowed seeds to establish a multiparty democracy, implemented a market economy, and permitted foreign investment and technical know-how?"
      - Items in this list should be considered individually. Many articles in this booklet will help students to answer these questions.

II Writing Ideas Here are some writing ideas which can be altered depending on the age and ability of the class.

A) Reading the articles in Chapter 5, Child Abuse, will give the class ideas for writing a story in the first person in which the students imagine they are living in Burma. What will they see during a typical day? How will their life be different? Will they be in school or at work or in the army? What do they think of the government? Describe their relationship with family and friends.

B) Write an imaginary interview of Aung San Suu Kyi. Include biographical information, her views about the government, her personal life, plans for the future of Burma and herself.

C) Write an editorial to a local newspaper or politician explaining why the United States should or should not enact trade and investment sanctions against Burma or why the United States should or should not become active in constructive engagement.

D) Reading some exerts from Chapter 11, Refugees from Burma, will help you be able to write a speech by a member of one of Burma's many minorities running for political office in Burma. What kind of rights will you demand for your people? How should your people be treated differently? What other demands do you think are appropriate?

III Mock Trial Following are some suggestions on how to conduct a mock trial using information in this resource book. Also included are suggestions on how to conduct class discussions and debates.

Large-Group Class Discussion

Thus format can be pursued using the decision-making approach, particularly when examining the alternatives and their consequences. Start the discussion by asking each student to write out his or her understanding of the alternative to be assessed (e.g., use of a demonstration bomb). Once the alternative is clearly defined, poll the students on their position on the alternative (good idea, bad idea, undecided). If disagreement exists, ask students to share the good and bad consequences of the alternative and write them on the board. Clarify the consequences when necessary. If class consensus exists, write the consequences on the board to see if students favor the alternative for the same reasons. Once the consequences are clarified, begin to probe the reasoning behind each consequence, examining its logic, identifying supportive evidence, and prioritizing its importance. End the discussion by re-taking a poll on the worth of the alternative. Have the results remained the same or changed? Why?

Small-Group Discussion

One form of small-group discussion often associated with the public issues approach is the scored discussion. In a scored discussion, the class is divided into small groups ranging from five to eight students. Each group is asked to discuss a public issue for about twenty-five minutes without interruption by the teacher or students outside the group. Prior to the discussion, each group prepares an agenda in which it identifies the factual, definitional, and moral issues the members wish to address during the discussion. The group's discussion and the contribution of each student are scored for substance and procedure. The scorer gives points for positive features, such as using evidence or inviting non-participants to share their ideas, and subtracts points for negative features, such as dominating the conversation or making personal attacks.

Debates

Although there are many debate forms, I have found two particularly effective in the classroom. The first is formal, Oxford-style debate, which includes opening speeches by students with opposing positions, interrogation and defense of each side's argument, and rebuttal speeches. This format can easily be integrated into one phase of the problem-solving approach. Students might be asked to debate two different hypotheses about the problem being investigated. . . . The debate starts with the opening arguments from each group and continues with interrogation by each group of the other's position. During the interrogation, either group could claim a "cream" if it detects (1) a serious factual error, (2) stalling by the other side, (3) a contradiction, (4) the inability to answer a main question, or (5) an effective counterpunch to a question. The debate concludes with rebuttal speeches by each group. A third group of judges scores the entire debate, including the assessment of the "creams," and both sets of speeches, and decides which hypothesis has the most validity.

A second form of debate is advocate decision making in which students debate a single position on a public issue (e.g., the United States should deny most-favored-nation trade status to China). The activity begins by clarifying the debate proposition and its context, and dividing the class into three groups of equal size—advocates for the proposition, advocates against the proposition, and decision makers. After the preparation of reasons, evidence, and questions by all three groups, the class is further divided into groups of three students, each containing an advocate for, an advocate against, and a decision maker. The debate, moderated by the decision maker, occurs in these small groups of three students each. The activity ends with a full class discussion in which students identify value conflicts as well as the strongest arguments and evidence presented in the debate.

Role-Playing

. . . [R]ole-playing [has been] described as having students portray other people. Students "step into someone else's shoes" as a means to experience firsthand something that they might otherwise only read or be told. . . . [O]ne function of role-playing is "educating for ethical behavior; more specifically, for individual integrity and group responsibility." Role-playing involves a sequence of steps: (1) "warming up" the group or problem confrontation, (2) selecting the participants, (3) preparing the audience to participate as observers, (4) setting the stage or scenario, (5) enacting the role-play, and (6) debriefing the enactment.

Role-playing is a common practice used in the mock trials and public hearings advocated by law-related educators. It is also adaptable to the moral reasoning approach in which groups role-play moral dilemmas as a springboard to large-group debriefing of the reasoning heard in the role-play. . . . [*Editor's note: Various role-playing activities are presented elsewhere in this publication.*]

Pro Se Court

A *pro se* (or do-it-yourself) court allows students to role-play a court case with a minimum of participants and simple rules of evidence. The court is organized as a triad consisting of a judge, who wilt hear the two sides and make the final decision; a plaintiff, who is the person bringing the action before the judge, and the defendant who is accused of wrongdoing or causing injury.

Pro se courts provide students with a simplified look at judicial decision making. *Pro se* courts provide an opportunity for all students in a class to be actively involved in the activity.

How to Proceed

1. *Clarify topics.* Help students understand the facts and issues in the case. The cases are clearly identified in the lessons in the student text and in the teacher's guide.

2. *Contact resource persons.* Invite an attorney or judge to act as a resource person.

3. *Assign roles.* Divide the class into three equal groups—judges, plaintiffs, and defendants.

4. *Prepare presentations.* Have the students meet in their respective groups to help each other prepare their presentations. Each student will be actively involved in the role-play, so preparation at this stage is vital to effective participation in the activity. Specific directions in the lessons in the student text and teacher's guide coordinate the use of the intellectual tools with student preparation for participation in this activity.

   Instruct the judges to review the case and the issues raised. Ask them to prepare questions that they would like to ask of the plaintiffs and defendants during the presentation phase of the activity. The questions should be designed to clarify positions on the issues which the judges will be called upon to decide. Do take some time to review with the judge's group some simple rules of procedure, such as the following:

   a. The plaintiff should present first, without interruptions from the defense. The defense presents their case second.

   b. Allow brief rebuttals from each side in the case.

   c. The judge may interrupt the presentations at any time to pose questions designed to clarify the arguments being made.

   Instruct the plaintiff and defendant groups to prepare an opening statement and arguments supporting their positions on the issues raised in the case.

5. *Arrange the classroom.* You will have multiple courts in session simultaneously; therefore, arrange the desks in the classroom into groups of three, one for each of the roles in the activity.

6. *Conduct the court hearing.* Before beginning the activity, match one student from the judge's group with one student from the plaintiff and one from the defendant groups. You may want to have the judges first take a desk in each of the groupings arranged around the room. Then ask one plaintiff end one defendant to join the group. Matching role-players may be more easily accomplished by providing role "tags" so students can quickly identify who is a judge, plaintiff, and defendant.

   Conduct the activity using the following procedures:

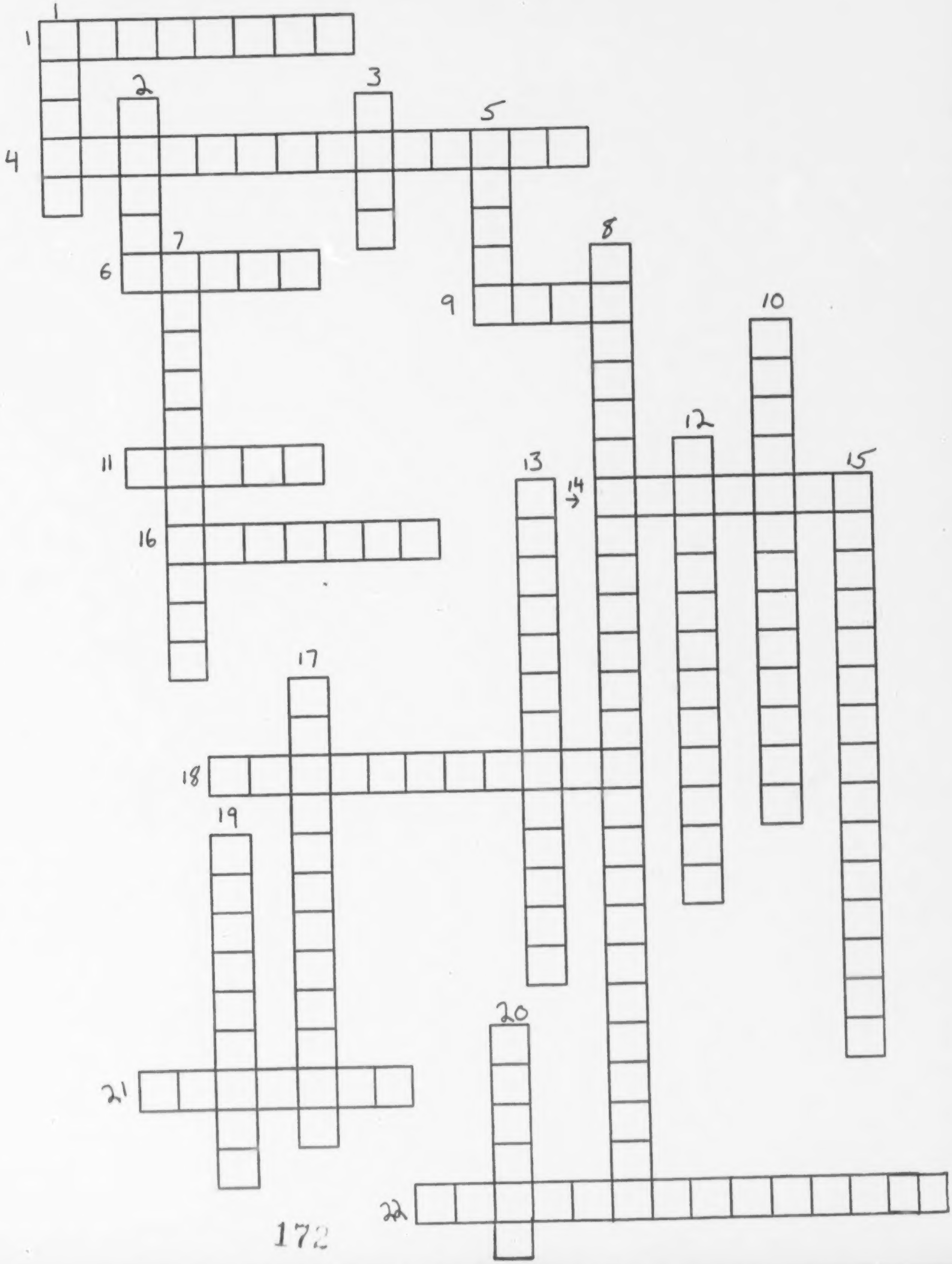
   a. Instruct the judges that when each has a plaintiff and a defendant, he or she may begin the court session.

   b. The judge should first hear opening statements by the participants—first the plaintiff and then the defendant. An appropriate time limit should be imposed on these statements.

   c. The plaintiff makes arguments and is questioned by the judge.
   d. The defendant presents his or her defense and is questioned by the judge.
   e. The judge asks each side for brief rebuttal statements.
   f. The judge makes his or her decision and explains the reasoning that supports it.

7. *Debrief the activity.* Debriefing questions vary according to the topic. Begin by asking individual judges to share with the class their decision and the reasoning supporting it. Discuss the facts and arguments presented in the case and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the positions taken. Also ask students to evaluate the court process itself. Conclude the debriefing by having students discuss the effectiveness of this activity as a tool for learning, including how well they performed their role in it. If a resource person assisted with the activity, that person should be included in the concluding discussion.

BURMA CROSSWORD PUZZLE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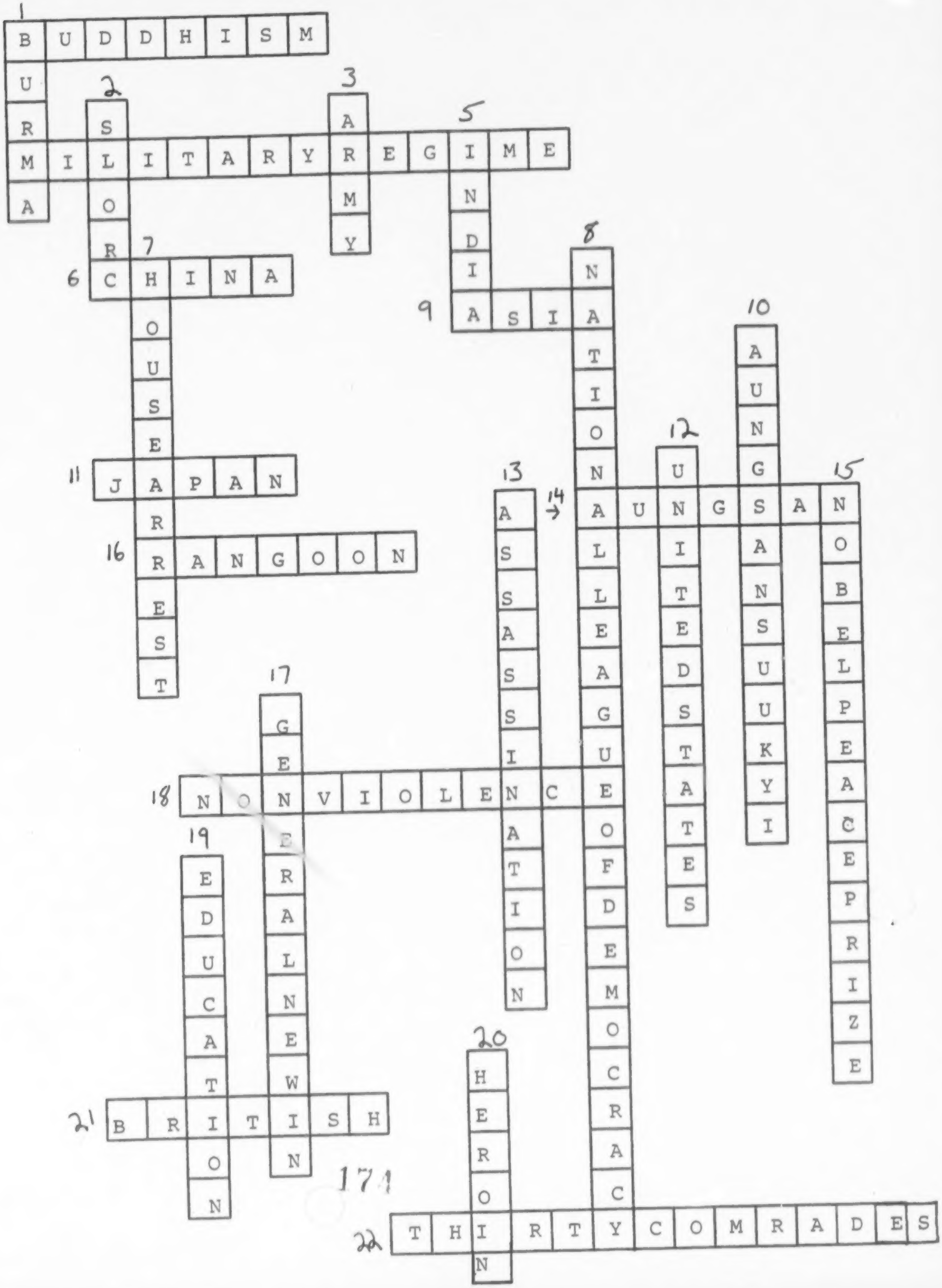
ACROSS

1. The primary religion of Burma
4. Government where the army rules
6. This country to the north of Burma, engages in trade and investment with Burma's military regime
9. Burma is in this continent
10. This country helped the Burmese overthrow British colonialism and then occupied Burma.
14. The leader of the Thirty Comrades.
16. The capital of Burma, where Aung San was assassinated
18. The NLD and Aung San Suu Kyi believe in this form of persuasion.
21. These people ruled Burma from the late 1800's until after the Second World War.
22. Burmese independence fighters

DOWN

1. Country currently called Myanmar by its military rulers
2. Group of generals who have ruled Burma since 1988.
3. Receives over 40% of the state budget.
5. This country provided much of the labor to develop Burma's colonial infrastructure.
7. Aung San Suu Kyi was arrested by SLORC and forced to stay in her house
8. NLD –The name of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's political party which won 80% of the 1990 national elections, but were never allowed to take office.
10. Leader of the NLD and daughter of Aung San, Burma's nationalist figure.
12. In order to support human rights in Burma, this country enacted a bill banning investment in Burma.
13. How Aung San and many of his cabinet members were killed in Rangoon
15. Aung San Suu Kyi won this while under house arrest in 1991.
17. One of the Thirty Comrades who staged a coup and took control of Burma and caused the country to lose much of its wealth.
19. SLORC spends less than 5% of the state budget on this.
20 Because there is little foreign investment in Burma, the SLORC must rely on selling this to get money for the country.

BURMA CROSSWORD PUZZLE


1 BUDDHISM
1 BURMA
2 SLORC
3 ARMY
4 MILITARYREGIME
5 INDIA
6 CHINA
7 HOUSEARREST
8 NATIONALLEAGUEOFDEMOCRACY
9 ASIA
10 AUNGSANSUUKYI
11 JAPAN
12 UNITEDSTATES
13 ASSASSINATION
14 AUNGSAN
15 NOBELPEACEPRIZE
16 RANGOON
17 GENERALNEWIN
18 NONVIOLENCE
19 EDUCATION
20 HEROIN
21 BRITISH
22 THIRTYCOMRADES

17. Resources

RECOMMENDED READINGS ON BURMA

Anna Allot (1994) *Inked Over, Ripped Out: Burmese Storytellers and Censors*. New York: Pen American Center.

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Article 19 (1994) *Paradise Lost? The Suppression of Environmental Rights and Freedom of Expression in Burma*. London: Article 19.

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Ba Maw (1968) *Breakthrough in Burma: Memoirs of a Revolution 1939-1946*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

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EarthRights International (1997) *Human Rights and the Environment*. EarthRights International.

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Kin Oung (1996) *Who Killed Aung San?* Expanded Second Edition. Bangkok: White Lotus.

Bertil Lintner (1990) *Outrage*. Bangkok: White Lotus.

Mi Mi Khine (1984) *The World of Burmese Women*. London: Zed Books.

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Mya Maung (1992) *Totalitarianism in Burma: Prospects for Economic Development.* New York: Paragon House.

Mya Maung (1991) *The Burma Road to Poverty.* New York: Praeger.

OO Win Naing (1996) *Cries from Insein.* Bangkok: All Burma Students' Democratic Front.

National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (1997) *Human Rights Year Book 1996.* Bangkok: National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma.

New Frontiers – a monthly briefing providing information on tourism, development and environmental issues in Burma. To subscribe, write: TERRA, 409 Pracharatbampen Road, Soi Pohitsuk Huay Kwang, Bangkok, 10310 Thailand.

U Nu (1975) *U Nu: Saturday's Son.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

John Okell (1994) *Introduction to Spoken Burmese Language.* Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.

George Orwell (1989) *Burmese Days.* New York: Penguin.

Rainforest Action Network (1993) *Southeast Asian Rainforests: A Resource Guide and Directory.* San Francisco: Rainforest Action Network.

Inge Sargent (1994) *Twilight over Burma: My Life as a Shan Princess.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Shway Yoe (1963) *The Burman: His Life and Notions.* New York: Norton.

Josef Silverstein (1993) *The Political Legacy of Aung San.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell SEAP

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Martin Smith (1991) *Burma: Insurgency and Politics of Ethnicity.* London: Zed Books.

Southeast Asian Information Network (1994) *Burma: Human Lives for Natural Resources, Oil and Natural Gas.* Chiang Mai: Southeast Asian Information Network.

Whitney Stewart (1997) *Aung San Suu Kyi: Fearless Voice of Burma.* Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company.

RECOMMENDED READINGS ON BURMA

K. S. Venkateswaran (1996) *Burma: Beyond the Law*. London: Article 19.

Chao Tzang Yawnghwe (1987) *The Shan of Burma: Memoirs of a Shan Exile*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Escape from Burma – Occasional Paper No 2, 1993, Centre for SEA Studies, Northern Territory University Darwin NT Australia. 28 pages – Paper interviews Dr. Sein Win at Mannerplaw, and interviews with members of the ABSDF at Pho Paw Hta and Dawn Gwin A. $10 incl. airmail postage. Contact: Dr. Paul Webb at P_WEBB@BANKS.NTU.EDU.AU

Other Writings

Albert Einstein (1982) *Ideas and Opinions*. New York: Crown

Vaclac Havel (1990) *Living in Truth*. Boston: Faber & Faber.

Raghavan Iyer (1993) *The Essential Writings of Mahatma Ghandi*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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Mamphela Ramphele (1997) *Across Boundaries: The Journey of a South African Woman*.

Burma:
The Struggle for Democracy and Freedom
A Resource Guide for Teachers

VIDEOS AND FILMS

1. *Beyond Rangoon*, a John Boorman film released in August 1995. Available at your local video rental store.

   Contact:
   Castle Rock Entertainment
   Public Relations Department
   Tel: (310) 888-3566
   Fax: (310) 285-2319

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2. *Inside Burma: Land of Fear*, the best human rights documentary by John Pilger, internationally acclaimed Australian documentarian. Includes footage of forced labor, interview with Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma's historical background, Unocol-Total Pipeline project, and much more. 54 minutes.

   Contact:
   For Free Burma Campaign, use:
   The Free Burma Coalition
   225 North Mills Street
   Madison, WI 53706
   Tel: (608) 827-7734
   Fax: (608) 263-9992
   E-mail: zni@students.wisc.edu

   For commercial use:
   CTE
   11145 NW 1st Place
   Coral Springs, FL 33071
   Tel: (954) 345-1620
   Fax: (954) 345-1490

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3. *Caught in the Crossfire*, a video documentary by IMAGES ASIS/Thailand. Available on VHS PAL and NTSC systems.

   Caught in the Crossfire is a stirring short documentary about the human rights abuses of women in Burma, perpetuated by the Burmese military. The footage and interviews with Burmese women and Burmese soldiers were documented along the Thailand-Burma border between 1994 and 1995.

Caught in the Crossfiire was designed as one in the three-part documentary video series, with study guides, to be used as an education kit about the human rights and environmental situation in Burma. Despite initial problems with the Chinese authorities, the video was premiered at the United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing in September 1995.

Contact: Images Asia
P.O. Box 2, Phrasingha Post Office
Muang, Chiangmai 50200
THAILAND
Fax: (66-53) 406-155
E-mail: dg@DS90.intanon.nectec.or.th

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4. *Burma: State of Despair*, a 12-minute documentary aired on BBC

Contact: The Free Burma Coalition
225 North Mills Street
Madison, WI 53706
Tel: (608) 827-7734
Fax: (608) 263-9992
E-mail: zni@students.wisc.edu

or

Vivien Morgan, Producer
19 Montserra Road
London, S.W. 15 2 LD
UNITED KINGDOM
Tel: (181) 789-1223
Fax: (181) 789-1562

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5. *Aung San Suu Kyi's Keynote Speech at the NGO's Forum, Beijing Women's Conference, August 1995*

A 13-minute videotape of the keynote address by Aung San Suu Kyi, the first international speech after her release on July 10, 1995.

Contact: The Free Burma Coalition
225 North Mills Street
Madison, WI 53706
Tel: (608) 827-7734
Fax: (608) 263-9992
E-mail: zni@students.wisc.edu

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6. Aung San Suu Kyi's acceptance speech, W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, August, 1996. Approximately 10 minutes. Includes footage of her non-violence political campaign narrated by Aung San Suu Kyi herself.

Contact: The Free Burma Coalition
225 North Mills Street
Madison, WI 53706
Tel: (608) 827-7734
Fax: (608) 263-9992
E-mail: zni@students.wisc.edu

or:

National Democratic Institute
1717 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Fifth floor
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202) 328-3136
Fax: (202) 939-3166

---

7. *The Heroin Wars* (3-part series), the best videodocumentary ever made about the history and politics of heroin.

Contact: Bullfrog Films, Inc.
P.O. Box 149
Oley, PA 19547
Tel: (800) 543-3764
Fax: (610) 370-1978
E-mail: bullfrog@igc.apc

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ADDRESSES AND WEBSITES

AFL-CIO
815 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: (202) 637-5050
Fax: (202) 637-5325
http://www.afl-cio.org

Amnesty International
304 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20003 USA
Tel: (202) 544-0200
Fax: (202) 546-7142
E-mail: admin-us@aiusa.org
http://www.amnesty.org

Article 19
Lancaster House
133 Islington High Street
London N1 9LH, UNITED KINGDOM
Tel: (44-171) 278-9292
Fax: (44-171) 713-1356
E-mail: article19@gn.apc.org
http://www.gn.apc.org/article19

Bureau of Democracy
Human Rights and Labor
Department of State, Room 7802
Washington, DC 20520 USA
Tel: (202) 647-2264
Fax: (202) 647-9519
http://www.state.gov

Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration
Southeast Asia Program Officer
U.S. Department of State
Washington, DC 20520 USA
Tel: (202) 663-1012
Fax: (202) 663-1530
http://www.state.gov

Burma Border Consortium
12/15 Convent Road Silom
Bangkok 10500 THAILAND
Tel: (66-2) 238 2568
Fax: (66-2) 266 5376
E-mail: bbcbkk@mozart.inet.co.th

BurmaNet News
http://freeburma.org/

Burma Trade Watch
http://www.citizen.org/pctrade/burma/burma.htm

Conservation International
2501 M Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20037 USA
Tel: (202) 429-5660
Fax: (202) 887-0192
http://www.conservation.org

EarthRights International
P.O. Box 83
Kanchanaburi 71000 THAILAND
Tel: (66-34) 624 275
E-mail: earth@ksc8.th.com

Federation of Trade Unions (Burma)
(FTUB)
815 15th Street, NW, Suite 910
Washington, DC 20005 USA
Tel: (202) 393-7342
Fax: (202) 393-7343
E-mail: ftubus1@ibm.net

Free Burma Coalition
http://www.freeburmacoalition.org/

Free Burma – No Petrodollars for SLORC
c/o International Rivers Network
1847 Berkeley Way
Berkeley, CA 94703 USA
Tel: (510) 848-1155
Fax: (510) 848-1008
E-mail: freeburma@irn.org
http://www.irn.org

Human Rights Watch/Asia
1522 K Street, NW, Suite 910
Washington, DC 20005 USA
Tel: (202) 371-6592
Fax: (202) 371-0124
http://www.hrw.org/about/divisions/asia.html

International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD)
63, rue de Bresoles, Suite 100
Montreal, Quebec H2Y 1V7 CANADA
Tel: (514) 283-6073
Fax: (514) 283-3792
E-mail: ichrdd@ichrdd.ca
http://www.ichrdd.ca

International Rescue Committee
122 E. 42nd Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10168-1289 USA
Tel: (212) 551-3000
Fax: (212) 551-3180
http://www.intrescom.org

International Women's Network for the Freedom of Aung San Suu Kyi
4-304, 5-417-16 Makuhari, Chiba-shi
Chiba-ken 260 JAPAN

Jesuit Refugee Service/USA
1424 16th Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036-2286 USA
Tel: (202) 462-0400
Fax: (202) 328-9212
E-mail: obryonjrs@aol.com
http://www.jesuit.org/refugee

Karen Refugee Committee
P.O. Box 5, Mae Sot
Tak Province 63110 THAILAND
Tel: (66) 55 523 947
Fax: (66) 55 546 869

Los Angeles Campaign for a Free Burma
11800 Avon Way 2
Los Angeles, CA 90066 USA
Tel: (310) 391-7788
Fax: (310) 393-3407
E-mail: karens@igc.apc.org

Pen American Center (PEN)
568 Broadway, Room 401
New York, NY 10012 USA
Tel: (212) 334-1660
Fax: (212) 334-2181
E-mail: pen@echo.nyc.com
http://www.pen.org

Project Maje
1014 SW Lane Street
Portland, OR 97201 USA
Tel/Fax: (503) 226-2189
E-mail: maje@hevanet.com

Rainforest Action Network
221 Pine Street, Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94104 USA
Tel: (415) 398-4404
Fax: (415) 398-2732
E-mail: boycottmc@ran.org
http://www.ran.org/

Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF)
5 rue Geoffory Marie
Paris 75009 FRANCE
Tel: (33-1) 44 83 8484
Fax: (33-1) 45 23 1151
E-mail: rsf@1sf.fr
http://www.calvacom.fr/rsf/

Soros' Open Society Burma Project
400 West 59th Street, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10019 USA
Tel: (212) 548-0632
Fax: (212) 548-4655
http://www.soros.org/burma.html

Sunsite Free Burma
http://sunsite.unc.edu/freeburma/

Students for Environmental Action at Stanford (SEAS)
Haas Center
558 Salvatierra Walkway
Stanford, CA 94305 USA
Tel: (650) 723-3307
Fax: (650) 725-7339
E-mail: seas@seas.stanford.edu
http://www.seas.stanford.edu

Towards Ecological Recovery and Regional Alliances (TERRA)
409 Pracharatbampen Road
Soi Pohitsuk Huay Kwa
Bangkok 10310 THAILAND
Tel: (66-2) 691 0718
Fax: (66-2) 691 0714
E-mail: per@wov.com

UN High Commissioner for Refugees
Bureau for Asia and the Pacific
P.O. Box 2500
CH-1211 Geneva #2 Depot
SWITZERLAND
Fax: (41-22) 739 7335
E-mail: hqao00@unhcr.ch
http://www.unhcr.ch

U.S. Committee for Refugees
1717 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Suite 701
Washington, DC 20036 USA
Tel: (202) 797-2105
Fax: (202) 797-2363
http://www.irsa-uscr.org

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